TWO·AMERICAN BOYS·IN·HAWAII

G·WALDO·BROWNE

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TWO AMERICAN BOYS IN HAWAII

NED PREPARES AN HAWAIIAN DINNER.

TWO AMERICAN BOYS IN HAWAII

BY

G. WALDO BROWNE

AUTHOR OF "THE WOODRANGER"

Illustrated by

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TO

MY YOUNG FRIEND

Frank Lawson Parshley

THIS STORY OF

"TWO AMERICAN BOYS IN HAWAII"

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

BY THE AUTHOR

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TWO AMERICAN BOYS IN HAWAII.

CHAPTER I.

"ALOHA!"

"ALOHA!" the sweetest greeting which ever fell on the human ear falls softly on mine, and again I seem to be floating in my frail canoe on the bluest of sapphire seas, under the deepest of cerulean skies, and in sight of the greenest of tropical landscapes, as I tell you, my young readers, the story of the "Two American Boys in Hawaii." And I fancy the mention of this last word awakens your interest, when you say:

"What, Hawaii! that is one of our new possessions, which became a part of our country only last summer."

Right, my young friends. I am glad you have kept so well posted on current events. What else can you tell me of Hawaii? I hear more than one say:

"They are the Sandwich Islands, discovered by Captain Cook in January, 1778, and named by him for Lord Sandwich, then lord of the admiralty of England."

Then another hastens to add:

"Captain Cook was killed on the shore of one of the islands by the natives, who were a cruel race of savages."

"I do not think the natives were all to blame that Captain Cook was killed," declares one who is evidently well versed in history. "He took advantage of their ignorance, abused their confidence, and treated them in a shameful manner. More in defence than in revenge they slew him."

"What of that? The whole island is nothing but volcanoes, and the natives barbarians!" exclaims another.

"You speak as if there were but one island, Vance," says the historian, "when there are really twelve in all, though only eight are inhabited, and one of these, Kahoolaui, is barely large enough to make a decent township."

"That leaves the 'seven sunny isles,' as the group is sometimes called," remarks the poet of the crowd, continuing with the quotation:

> "'Summer isles of Eden lying
> In dark purple spheres of sea.'"

"Hawaii is the largest of them," resumes the historian, unheeding the interruption, "and that contains four thousand square miles, while the others are about two thousand square miles in extent altogether. Vance was partly right, but too sweeping in his assertion in regard to the nature of the islands. They are of volcanic formation, and have the largest active volcano in the world. They are mountainous, too, Hawaii having two summits almost fourteen thousand feet each above the sea. But there are very productive valleys, and the climate is the most even and finest on the globe. The temperature near the coast never goes above ninety or below sixty-five degrees. If you wish for cooler

weather you have only to seek a higher altitude, where there is a frost every night. Hawaii has no sickly season and no local diseases."

"But the people are largely lepers, and so many sick from that loathsome disease, leprosy, must be an awful sight," says a new speaker.

"Vance called the natives barbarians," continues the historian, who is not inclined to notice interruptions, "but he must have meant a very mild sort. They began to pattern after civilised ways as fast as they found them out. There were as many as seven petty kinglets until Kamehameha I., the Napoleon of Hawaii, a little less than a hundred years ago, raised an army powerful enough to conquer the other kings and bring the islands all under his rule. Missionaries had little opposition in establishing the Congregational Church where the temples of idolaters had stood for unknown ages. Under the influence of Christianity and enlightenment the government grew stronger and better, until a kingdom had been founded in mid-ocean, over two thousand miles from the nearest mainland, wise and rich enough to attract the whole world."

"How learnedly Virgil talks," speaks up one who has been waiting for this opportunity. "But he stops short of the most interesting part of Hawaiian history. The government of his 'ocean kingdom' did not satisfy the different races of the people who flocked to Hawaii as soon as the attractions of the islands had become known abroad. Discontent crept into the affairs of government, until the people asked Uncle Sam to govern them. Congress finally agreed to it, and July 7, 1898, President McKinley signed the papers which made Hawaii a part of the United States. August 12th the union was publicly proclaimed in Hono-

lulu with great enthusiasm, when the flag of Hawaiian kings was pulled down and the stars and stripes raised in its place."

"Good for you, boys! I am glad you can tell so much of Hawaiian history. Now what else can you tell me of the islands?"

"I have read in an interesting book I have at home," says one who has not spoken before, "that their latitude is the same as the Gulf of Mexico. If one were to draw a line toward the east from the capitol building of Honolulu he would cut off the tail of Lower California, the head of Mexico, knock the chip off Cuba's shoulder, to find himself soon after floundering in the big basin of the Atlantic Ocean. Going westward he would have to cross thousands of miles of water to find the first land in Hong Kong, China, and keeping on he would pass through Calcutta, Mecca, Egypt, and lose himself in the heart of Sahara. North and south of Hawaii the vast Pacific rolls from pole to pole."

"I guess that water and volcanoes are about all there are to talk about," declares an obstinate listener. "I have heard it called the 'Inferno of the World.'" Then the historian quickly rejoins:

"Where that term has been used once it has been called a hundred times the 'Paradise of the Pacific.' There must be lots of fertile land, for the island of Maui has the most productive cane fields and the biggest sugar plantations in the world. The islands have fine groves of palms, bananas in abundance, oranges, breadfruit, plaintain, sugar-cane, pomegranates, strawberries, and cocoanuts. In fact, nearly all of the vegetation of the tropical and temperate zones grows naturally there."

"The flora, so an uncle of mine who lives there has

written mamma," says a girlish voice, "is the most lovely he ever saw. He says no portion of the islands is entirely lacking of flowers. Even the floods of the burning mountains are crimsoned with the transparent leaves of the *ohia* blossoms, flecked with the gold of the sunny *hau*, and touched with the variegated hues, the pink and white, the blue and purple, of the convolvuli, which entwine their slender bodies around twig and tree, rock and crag, to bud and bloom for ever in the smoke-mist of the waterfalls. In the valleys the display is more magnificent. Everywhere are flowers and reminders of flowers. Mangoes hang from their parent stems like bronze plummets, oranges swing in the breeze like starry worlds, monkey-pods in bloom look like terraced gardens, while nearly all of the trees in their seasons of blooming are immense bouquets of great beauty and fragrance. The houses of the people are pillowed amid gorgeous trailers with magenta blossoms, passion flowers, and masses of vines tipped with trumpet-shaped flowers, while the air is filled with the odours of the lily, tuberose, oleander, and roses, and many others whose names I have forgotten."

"My papa says there are no snakes in Howwya!" pipes in a childish voice from the distance.

"And they have no man-eating animals, like the tiger," says a companion, as if not to be outdone.

"I have read somewhere that the islands are really nothing but the peaks and highlands of a lost continent, which sank long ago and left so much above water. You needn't laugh, Vance; you know we were reading only yesterday of the lost continent Atlantis. I don't see that it is any stranger for a continent to sink in the Pacific than in the Atlantic Ocean."

"Look here, boys! we are keeping the story-teller wait-

ing. It is our friend we want to hear. Please tell us, dear story-teller, of the adventures of the 'Two American Boys in Hawaii,' what they saw and did. We are impatient for you to begin."

Bravo, my dear boys and girls! Your interest and knowledge relative to the "Sunny Isles of the Pacific" encourage me to proceed. I can see that whatever task I impose upon myself will be appreciated by you. If I add to the information which you have obtained of the far-away islands, you will thank me, and if I dispel some pleasant illusion or correct an error you will be none the less pleased, because of your confidence in me and your desires to broaden your ideas. Thus I am emboldened to go on. As well as I can I will tell you the story of "our boys;" how they became innocently involved in the great quarrel which unsettled the island monarchy, and settled, for all time it is hoped, the mooted question of Hawaiian independence; the mysterious disappearance of their friends, and the stirring scenes through which they passed in search of them; their strange wanderings in an underground world; the temple of idolaters on the crater of the sleeping volcano, and the dusky pagans who flitted like shadows over the uncanny spot; the weird ceremonies of the handful of benighted Hawaiians and their last sacrifice to the goddess Pele; the outbreak of the fiery mountain, and the ride, which is still the talk of every one, to the rescue of loved ones; adventure following adventure in rapid succession, the shifting scenes interspersed with descriptions of the physical features of these remarkable isles, their solitary mountains, pillars of congealed lava and stone, the largest volcanoes in the world, wonderful whether their fires are burning too low to illume the sunset sky, and their heads capped with everlasting snow, or if throbbing

and beating over the mysterious fountains of Kilauea, which has from time immemorable kept bright against day and night, blazing sun and waxing moon, its awful lamp of lurid fire as faithfully as the stars have kept their vigil; their bottomless ravines, their furrowed valleys and green-clad plains, lava beds of bygonè ages; the rare good-fellowship of plants, shrubs, and trees, the delicate tamarind, sturdy iron-wood, feathery algaroba, broad-leafed banana, clinging azella, giant fern, star-eyed orange, stately king palm, bamboo, mango, candlenut, breadfruit, cocoanut, pomegranate, sugar-cane, rank grass of a perennial green, wide-spreading umbrella-tree, papaia, monkey-pod, and a host of others, small and great, with equal claim to some virtue, all the representatives of many lands, mingling here in happy confusion, overhung with the rare perfume of a tropical vegetation; the delightful climate whose southern languor is constantly refreshed by the ozone breath of the northern seas; the many races of people living together in harmony and contentment, along with the dusky, dark-eyed natives, clinging to the legends and customs of a vanished day, their flowers, and their softly spoken *alohas*, alike in salutation and farewell, — *aloha!* "love to you."

CHAPTER II.

"HALF-WAY AROUND THE WORLD."

"HURRAH for Hawaii, the Paradise of the Pacific!" Lewis Hiland was returning from East Headley post-office to his home, a mile out of the village, at the top of his speed, and as he came running up the road, out of breath and excited, he waved over his head a letter sheet, while he continued to shout:

"Hurrah for Hawaii!"

As he came in sight of his home, he snatched his cap from his head and flourished it in the air at the appearance of his Aunt Mary in the doorway, straight from the flour barrel and kneading board, which fact was attested to by the generous coating of white dust on her hands and bare forearms.

"Why, Lew Hiland!" she cried, very much frightened at his outburst of boyish enthusiasm, "what has happened? Have you suddenly gone wild?"

"Wild with joy, auntie. I am crazy with delight."

"For the good land's sake! I never knew a Hiland to fly off like that. You must have lost your head. Why, dear me! an hour ago you were the most despondent boy I ever see, and with your cough and your low spirits I felt certain you would die when the leaves fall."

"You know what made me so low-spirited, auntie. Didn't I have reason, when glum old Doctor Mason had just told

me this cough would be the death of me? That directly, too, unless I went away from this New England climate, — to Colorado, for instance?"

"I know it, Lew," said Mrs. Farmer, in a softer tone. "I felt badly for you. You got that cough and those bad symptoms from your mother, not that she was to blame. Poor, dear soul! it killed her all too soon. No Hiland ever had a cough. But do tell me what has happened to so upset you."

Quickly choking back the sensation of grief felt at the mention of his sainted mother's name and her untimely fate, Lewis, in a more subdued voice, replied:

"It is a letter, auntie, a letter from Ned Merriweather, inviting, ay, urging, me to come to Hawaii and make him a visit, to live with him if I like there. To think it should come just at the time I am trying to decide where to go to get rid of this ugly cough, if I do not want to stay here in Headley and die of it! You know I haven't heard from Ned for nearly a year. It has been over ten years since he went with his folks to that far-away island to live. I wonder if Ned is bigger than I am."

"None of the Merriweathers were as large as the Hilands," replied Aunt Mary, to whom the Hilands seemed about perfect. "You can't think of going to that jumping-off place. Why, none but man-eating savages live there."

"You are mistaken, auntie. The native Hawaiians were never cannibals, notwithstanding what has been told about them. You know I always liked history and geography, and Ned's being there has made me greatly interested in Hawaii, so I have studied it up closely. The foreign population greatly outnumbers the native now, and there are over three thousand Americans on the islands."

"It will take lots of money and a long time to go there," said Aunt Mary, unwilling to give up.

"Not so much money as you might think, auntie. I have about a hundred dollars in the bank, and I am sure I can get there with that, by getting as cheap rates as I can and working my fare part of the way. By taking the cars to San Francisco and then passage on a line steamer I could get there in two weeks. But I shall take a trading vessel, which will be cheaper, though it will take a little longer. But a few days' time will not make any difference to me. I wonder I haven't thought of going to Hawaii before. Let me read you what Ned has to say about the country and climate."

Referring to the letter in his hand, Lewis read in a clear voice, which rang with something of the spirit of the writer, as he continued:

"'I cannot begin to describe the beauties of the island, for enough cannot be said in its praise. Hawaii is a paradise indeed. Everything to be found in a tropical clime grows here spontaneously, while side by side with them are to be seen the products of the temperate zone in unequalled size and beauty. As to the climate, that is simply perfect. I do not believe there is another spot on earth which can match it. None of your New England fogs, clouds, and easterly storms. The clear, velvet atmosphere is a balm for weak lungs, and the rich, smiling landscape a cure for discontented hearts. If you want to see and to be in the real Eden of the world, come to Hawaii.'

"Ned has lots more to say, but you notice in what I read he says the climate is what I need to find. I am sure it will cure my cough, and that, all things considered, it is the best place for me to go."

Lewis was not naturally an impulsive boy, so that he gen-

erally showed good judgment in his conclusions, but his aunt was loath to part with him, as he had lived with her over ten years, and she said:

"But so far!"

"Half-way around the world, auntie, or nearly. But you know I cannot stay here, and if I must go away hadn't you as lief I would go a little farther to be among friends?"

"I was thinking of that, Lewis, and I suppose you had better consult Doctor Mason as to what he thinks."

This was really giving her consent, and Lewis went into the house with a lighter heart than he had known for many weeks. The truth told, the good doctor's well-meant warning and advice had worried him more than he had cared to own. Full of spirit and high aspirations, it seemed hard for him to give up all on account of an inherited weakness. His mother, as his aunt had said, had fallen a victim to that dread New England disease, consumption, when he had been but six years old, though he had a very vivid memory of her. Her last words of counsel, begging him to follow the path of honesty and live so he would be loved and respected, had become a fixed star to him. This was the more deeply felt for the dark cloud resting over his father's name. John Hiland had been honoured by his fellow men and trusted with important offices, until, in a moment of weakness, he had yielded to temptation, and taken the funds placed in his keeping. Then followed the exposure and disgrace, the flight of the ruined man, and later the finding of such evidence as led the people to believe that he had sought escape in a suicide's death. This had been before the decease of Lewis's mother, but every one felt that the blow had hastened her end.

If those who knew all this had remembered it, and of

course they had, no one had been cruel enough to speak of it to Lewis, while he had shown himself the soul of honour. It is safe to say that all loved and respected him, so that when the symptoms of the family malady began to show themselves, he had their sympathy.

Lewis lost no time in consulting Doctor Mason, who listened to him kindly, and agreed with him that it was the best thing he could do. After giving him medical as well as fatherly advice, he wished him a pleasant journey and a speedy recovery of health.

That night the excited boy's sleep was broken with vague dreams of far-away lands covered with forests of a strange, tropical growth, or vast fields of wild cotton, while everywhere smoking mountains reared their gaping mouths in readiness to send forth a storm of lava and black foam. Strange, uncivilised people stood on the shore to greet him with a glad welcome, or drive him back into the sea, as their impulsive natures might dictate, while in his ears rang faintly the parting words of tearful friends in his native land.

CHAPTER III.

IN A STRANGE LAND.

"LOOK, mamma! there is the head of the world!" exclaimed a childish voice from among the little group of people gathered near the lee rail on the deck of the staunch ship *Pink of the Pacific*, and, aroused from the reverie into which he had fallen, Lewis Hiland glanced to the leeward to discover in the distance the thrice welcome sight of land. It is true he looked on only a gray, barren peak of rock rising from the depths of the sea, but it held the native elements of earth and the promise of something better and brighter than its grim, solitary figure.

"Koko Head," said an older passenger near by. "It is the extremity of the island of Oahu, on the southern shore of which stands Honolulu, the capital of the 'seven isles of the sea.' It doesn't look to be more than five miles away, but it is over twenty, so clear and lucid is the atmosphere. You are nearer right than you dream, little one, in calling it the 'head of the world.'"

By this time the interest of every person on the vessel was awakened to a lively pitch, and the torrid rays of the sun, which a moment before had kept every idler in the shade, were now ignored. The sight of land to the seafarer, let him love the watery element as he may, is one ever to stir the blood and bring such sensations to the beholder

as no other prospect can. And the traveller, who has any conception of his destination, approaches the outposts of Hawaii with his imagination stirred with such tinges of romance and expectations of unsurpassed beauty as no other shore awakens.

These feelings were felt more fully by Lewis than by any other person present, as he realised that at last his long ride across a continent and half-way over the largest ocean on the globe had been completed, and that he was really in sight of that land which might become his future home. Thus he watched with intense interest the increasing attractiveness of the gray column, as they continued to approach it.

Its brown lava tints and vivid tropical green touched with the blending glories of a light mist and sunshine, a wild and grotesque landscape was gradually unfolded to his rapt gaze. It is true he beheld lofty, stern-looking peaks, sunburned and weather-beaten, with every trace of their volcanic birth marked on their rugged forms, but the frowning crags, as white as snow, were cleft by chasms and ravines of a deep green hue, streaked with threads of silver, which he had to learn were streams of water. Then, as the coast line came into plainer sight, the rare panorama was fringed by the feathery cocoanut-trees of the tropic clime, and outside of these encircled by the mottled surf of old ocean.

"There is Diamond Point, with one foot washed by the sea and the other planted high and dry on the land," said the man who had previously spoken, and who had evidently been in that vicinity before. "Between its wet foot and dry one rises the stump of the Daysman, looking as if its head and shoulders had been broken off with the stroke of some mighty axe. Notice how plainly it shows in its brilliant shades of volcanic ash and green skirts of the foot-

hills traces of the internal fires long since burned out. Beyond is Waikiki, with its cluster of grass huts and over-topping palms. Further inland are the valleys of Pauoa, Manoa, and Palolo, all clothed in their everlasting green suits and veiled in perpetual mist. Such a scene — "

"Honolulu!" some one cried, in the midst of the voluble speaker's discourse, and instantly the momentous calm was broken. Every one seemed suddenly to go wild with ecstasy.

They were now close to the coral reefs of Oahu's south-western shore, and between that and a broken range of mountains in the background Lewis gazed on what looked at first simply an extensive grove of palm and banana trees, but above their tops he soon caught the gleam of church spires, and here and there the gray roof of a house. He knew then he was looking on the leaf-embowered capital of the island kingdom, and which was not inaptly termed the "Mistress of the Pacific." On one side — that nearest them — the town was margined by a belt of bright sea sand, and on the other bordered by a band of deep green.

As they sailed into the quiet harbour, he saw, at their respective moorings, the war-ships of Germany, England, and his own country. Whether it was due to their formidable presence or not, a noticeable calm everywhere prevailed.

The general appearance of this port was not unlike the harbours of our Southern cities, except for the greater variety of races which appeared on the scene the moment their signal was given. No sooner had their arrival been announced than guns were fired, and the wharf was almost simultaneously thronged with people, such a mixture of colour and blood as Lewis had never seen. A specimen of every race in the world seemed to be represented, the

harbour began to fill with rowboats of all descriptions, as native and alien citizens came out to greet them, some in hope of meeting friends, some on business, some to gain news from the outside world, some to earn a little money in doing errands for the new arrivals, some out of mere curiosity, and others, it may be, simply because their companions had come.

Everywhere bustle and excitement had swiftly succeeded the former restfulness.

Amid the confused mingling of people, Lewis looked in vain for Ned Merriweather, whom he had hoped and expected would meet him upon his arrival. No one whom he could recognise as his old friend was to be seen, though he went ashore with renewed hope to continue his search with increasing anxiety.

Still he was doomed to disappointment. He saw youths who must have been near his age and size, but not one who bore a speaking resemblance to the Ned he had pictured in his mind's eye, — the grown-up Ned of his early childhood days.

"I didn't dream but what I should be able to recognise him among a thousand," he thought. "I wonder if he will have any trouble in picking me out. Perhaps he did not get my letter in season to know I was coming, and is not here! How stupid of me not to think of that! If that is the case won't I surprise him? I suppose I must inquire of some one the way to his home. Of course I can find some one easily enough who will know his father, James Merriweather, as I judge he has been quite prominent in affairs here."

Even in his concern and anxiety from landing alone among strangers in a strange land, he could not help noticing the

merry looks and light-heartedness of those around him. Joyous talk and ringing laughter was heard on every hand, until one and all seemed happy and free from care.

In the midst of this cheerful riot of good-natured people a sudden dash of rain fell on the scene, and the surprised crowd finding shelter under whatever was handiest, the wharf was cleared in even shorter time than it had been filled.

Lewis found slight protection from the shower under a grass-roofed market stand, where double the people it could well cover flocked, bananas, oranges, sweetmeats, and other toothsome edibles thrown in a promiscuous heap in the midst of laughing, jostling seekers of shelter from the rain. To his surprise, no complaint was made by the owner, who gathered up, as best he could, the ruins of his stock when the rain had cleared away as suddenly as it had begun.

Anxious to find his way to the home of his friend, having given up expecting to meet him, Lewis lost no further time in beginning his inquiries in regard to the proper course for him to follow. To his surprise, the first man he addressed, and whom he judged to be an Englishman, paid no heed to his question, but moved brusquely off in a direction opposite to that he was going.

Concluding the other had not heard his inquiry, he looked around for another person to whom he might appeal. This second individual shook his head, and passed on with quickened steps.

"Looks like a German," thought Lewis, "and probably cannot speak English. I will be more careful whom I address next time."

As he continued to advance along the main street, which was lined on either side by low buildings bustling with

business of all kinds, he soon reached a wide, level thoroughfare with dwellings that reminded him of the houses of American cities. The people he met were, for the most part, well dressed, and there was an air of thrift and contentedness on every hand, which was quite the reverse of what he had expected to find. Altogether, Honolulu had so far been a pleasant surprise to him. But knowing every step he took might be taking him from his destination, he looked closely about for another person to whom he might make his inquiries.

The third man was more civil than the others, for he did condescend to reply:

"I do not know."

The next did not stop to answer, but the fifth proved more courteous than any of the rest had been, for he stopped to say, in a low tone:

"Young man, you are evidently a stranger here, and, as you look like an honest youth, I want to caution you against a too free use of that Yankee tongue of yours. Where James Merriweather is, no man in Hawaii knows, or knowing, he will not tell. If you value your safety, I should advise you not to speak his name again in public. If you can find him, you can do what the best detectives in Honolulu have failed to do."

Without stopping to note the effect of his words, the stranger walked hastily on his way, leaving Lewis dumfounded at his speech.

CHAPTER IV.

ALL FOR A HAT.

"WHAT can this all mean?" Lewis said, involuntarily, as he gazed after the retreating stranger. "There is certainly something wrong in regard to Mr. Merriweather, though what it can be is beyond my range of imagination."

Carriages of various descriptions were moving up and down the broad street, while a far greater number of men, women, and children were coming and going on horseback.

He paid little heed to these travellers, as he began to look about again for some one on foot to whom he could repeat his inquiries, when his attention was arrested by the sight of a ponderous vehicle drawn by a pair of large horses, which pranced gaily along. Seated comfortably amid the deep cushions of the heavy carriage, which bore in flaming colours the royal arms of England, was seated a pompous-appearing, florid-faced gentleman, while sitting painfully erect on his high seat was his liveried coachman, who had all he could do to manage the spirited animals.

The highly caparisoned equipage was barely opposite Lewis, when a strong flaw of wind lifted the Englishman's well-polished hat from his head, and carried it over and over toward the ground. The driver, at command of his master, quickly brought the nervous horses to a stop, though he could not leave his seat to recover the hat.

This last came flying through the air not far from Lewis,

who sprang forward to catch it, if possible, before it should fall in the dust. He was frustrated in this attempt, however, by the sudden appearance on the scene of a second carriage, carried along at a terrific pace. Like that of the Englishman, it was in charge of a uniformed driver, while on the seat behind him was a large woman, with a complexion of nearly a tawny hue. She was dressed in showy attire, with a generous display of jewelry, and held in one of her fat hands a monstrous fan.

Lewis did not give the dazzling equipage a second glance, for, in order to carry out his purpose, he had to leap directly in front of the plunging horses. So close was he carried that he found himself almost under their fore feet.

Then, as he caught the runaway hat in his left hand, and tried to beat a swift retreat from his dangerous situation, the liveried driver uttered an angry imprecation, and sent the stinging lash of his long whip winding about the head and shoulders of Lewis.

The sharp stroke caused him to drop the hat, but, aroused by the unwarranted blow, he caught each of the maddened horses by the bit, with a force which abruptly checked their headlong advance.

This excited the driver of the span to another exclamation of rage, supplemented this time by a cry of dismay from the woman.

"Let go there, you young reprobate!" yelled the incensed man, poising his cruel whip for another blow.

Seeing the hat at his feet, and having no other wish than to save that, Lewis released his hold on the horses, and snatching it up, leaped back out of their way.

Finding themselves free from restraint, the frightened animals bounded wildly ahead, no attempt being made on

the part of their driver to stop them, or to even check their furious pace. The woman looked back with a frightened expression on her countenance, and she called frantically on her servant to stop, but she and her stately turnout were soon lost to sight in the distance.

"That was a risky experiment, young man," said the occupant of the other carriage, which now stood directly in front of Lewis, "and came near costing you more than my poor hat is worth. I assure you I appreciate your action, and I will see that the queen makes proper amends for the foolish conduct of her man. Jason is getting altogether too important for his place, and unless Queen Liliuokalani discharges him, he will make further trouble for her."

All this sounded vague to Lewis in his excited state of mind, but he realised that the speaker must be a person of some importance in Hawaii, and that the woman in the other carriage was the queen. Flecking the dust from the hat with his handkerchief, he returned the property to its owner.

"Very many thanks, young man, for your kindness, and if there is any favour I can do for you, I will cheerfully place myself at your service. I judge you are a newcomer in Honolulu."

As he finished speaking, the gentleman handed Lewis a highly finished, gilt-edged card, which told him that this pompous, yet suave, stranger was the British consul to the Hawaiian kingdom.

"The act of mine was not worth mentioning, sir, and if you can answer a question for me I shall feel more than paid."

"Ask a dozen questions if you wish, young man. In my official position I dare say I can help you."

The consul's tone was kindly, and Lewis unhesitatingly

inquired concerning Mr. James Merriweather, whereupon the other pursed up his lips, and shook his gray head ominously.

"You have caught me the first time, young man," he said. "Are you a relative of the family?"

"No, sir; but before Mr. Merriweather came here he lived near my folks in the United States. I have come to Hawaii on the invitation of his son, whom I used to know as a playmate."

"I see. Well, I don't mind telling you all I know about James Merriweather, which you will find very little. He has been a man of considerable importance here, and owned quite an extensive sugar plantation a few miles out of the city on this road, where he has lived up to yesterday. Since then he has disappeared, and no one seems to know where he has gone. What makes it stranger, his family has gone, too. Of course they may all return in an hour, but the suspicion is abroad that they will not be seen again in Hawaii. As a friend I would counsel you not to be very free in proclaiming your connection with the family, especially as you are an American. The family is just now under a cloud. I am sorry I can be of no further service to you in this respect, but that is really all I can tell you of James Merriweather. Is there anything else I can do for you?"

"No, sir," faltered Lewis, at a loss to know what to say, and while he stood there in the middle of the street quite bewildered over his situation the elegant carriage rolled away, its occupant glancing back with a smile and a wave of the hand.

An approaching vehicle quickly called Lewis back to his senses, and, springing aside to escape contact with the passing teams, he rallied his thoughts, finding expression in the low-spoken words:

"Well, this is an unexpected turn in affairs, but it may not prove as serious as it looks. I will hail the prevailing good-nature of all I see as a promising omen, and try and find Mr. Merriweather the same as if I had heard of nothing unusual. After all, he or some of the family may be at home by the time I get there."

Trying to awaken a hope he was far from feeling by this self-assurance, he resumed his journey toward the open country. As he kept on the passers-by became less numerous, until he had left the city behind him, and he found himself plodding along a wide, level road, as smooth as the kitchen floor of his New England home. Even in his disturbance of mind he did not fail to notice that he was entering a scene of great beauty. Flowers of many tints and great fragrance decked the wayside and dotted the landscape with their varying forms of beauty, tall grasses waved their heavy heads sleepily in the steady breeze, while here and there broad fields of rice or sugar-cane lent an aspect of thrift and home-like pleasure, while rows of stately palm-trees added grace and dignity to the tropical landscape, touched everywhere with the radiant green of nature at her best. Though he had yet to learn the fact, he had entered the valley of Nuuanu, claimed by many to be the fairest landscape in all the world.

Now that he had left behind the last of the series of villages forming the city of Honolulu, he saw fewer and fewer people on the road, and these were nearly all mounted on horses. He was thinking that he must hail the next rider he met to make further inquiry in regard to the way to the home of Mr. Merriweather, when some one, coming at greater speed than any one he had seen, dashed past him.

Glancing up, he saw that the horseman was a boy younger than himself, and he knew by his swarthy complexion that he was a native. After going a few rods beyond him the youthful rider suddenly slackened the pace of his horse, and, looking back, waited for him to come up. The dusky countenance was wreathed in a smile, as the young stranger asked him if he wouldn't like to ride.

"I wish to find Mr. James Merriweather's house," replied Lewis. "I hope you can tell me where he lives."

The smile deepened into a grin as the boy replied, in a low, musical tone:

"Long way; Keoni go that way; better ride. Me glad to have you."

The offer seemed to be made in good faith, and the speaker appeared to be honest. Already getting tired, Lewis gladly climbed up behind the obliging rider, who lost no further time in urging his horse forward at a rate of speed which gave our hero such a shaking up as made him wish he had declined the invitation to ride.

They were now fairly in the country, and the road, for long distances at a stretch, ran under archways of overhanging trees, whose dense foliage effectually shielded the earth from the furious rays of the sun at the mid-hours of the day. There were many varieties of growth, the most common of which were the date and cocoa palm, bamboo, orange, breadfruit, candlenut, monkey-pod, and umbrella trees. The air was filled with the fragrant odours of the tuberose, gardenia, lily, oleander, the enormous trumpetflower, as white as snow, and others of scarcely less fragrance and beauty.

Buried almost out of sight by this reeking tropical growth were the homes of the native and foreign inhabitants strewn

along in a sort of happy, haphazard alternation. The architecture of these dwellings showed an odd mixture of the arts of many lands, but bore an almost universal order of setting. So deeply were the majority of them imbedded in large-leafed, bright-blossoming plants that it was difficult to discover the walls underneath this flowing drapery of variegated tints. Some of the houses were not unlike dwellings he had seen in New England, save for the ever-to-be-seen veranda and never-to-be-seen chimney. To carry out the similarity, the walls were always painted white with green trimmings. Side by side with these were simple structures of grass and bamboo, abodes of cream-coloured coral blocks laid in cement, low-walled huts of a sun-baked brick called *adobe*, and houses which seemed an odd union of grass, wood, and coral. The harsh lines of all softened by the abundant festoons of trailing and climbing vines, this singular display of the arts of different races presented a pleasing variety.

From the verandas of these homes, primitive and otherwise, Lewis saw the curious occupants peering out from behind their latticework of jessamine, passion flowers, and others which were new to him, as they rode on and on, until only at rare intervals were dwellings to be seen and they entered a wilder country.

His companion showing no signs of stopping, Lewis asked him twice if they were not almost to the home of Mr. Merriweather, receiving the same reply each time :

" Soon be there."

Then the houses ceased to be seen at all. The perennial green of the vegetation was relieved at places by splashes of yellow and bright red. They were at an altitude where the air was clear and crisp. Around them cone-like mounts of gray rock reared their forbidding heads, their crests stuck

full of splinters and needles of stone, so they looked like huge pincushions.

If Lewis had begun to feel any concern about the course taken by his companion, he was confident now there was something wrong in his conduct. He had never seen the other before, and he felt he must be a stranger to him, but he believed foul play of some kind was intended.

"Stop!" he exclaimed. "I am not going any farther with you until you tell me where you are going."

"Keoni take you to Jimmy Merriweather's," replied the young native, without changing a muscle of his features, though he urged his horse forward faster than ever.

Lewis hesitated to act no longer. He felt sure harm was meant for him. Quickly reaching around the other and grasping the bridle-reins with a hold which suddenly stopped the animal, he cried out:

"I tell you, I am not going any farther until you explain what it means to come into this wilderness. You are not going toward Mr. Merriweather's plantation at all."

The young Hawaiian did not reply, but slipped quickly from the saddle to the ground. At the same moment a dozen swarthy faces were thrust above the tall grass growing on every side, and Lewis knew he was surrounded by enemies.

CHAPTER V.

NED MERRIWEATHER.

"HI, there! stand back, and let the fellow alone!" rang out a clear, commanding voice from over the heads of all, as the natives sprang from their concealment, and sought to lay violent hands on Lewis.

One of them had been swift enough to reach the horse's bit, but the terrified animal flung him under its feet at the same moment of the warning words from the station in mid-air, and struggled to break from the hold on its rein.

At sound of the ringing voice over their heads the startled assailants stopped suddenly in the midst of their advance and looked wildly around for the speaker.

"Ride back down the valley, young fellow," called out the unknown and still unseen person, "and if the black worshippers of Pele offer to molest you, I will make sieves of them with my gun.

"Do you hear that, Loneau?" evidently addressing the leader of the little Hawaiian group. "Begone, you and your men, and never desecrate Pali with your presence again, unless you come on a better errand."

The Hawaiians had now discovered the speaker, who was standing on the peak of one of the singular tumuli rearing their heads on every quarter. Having got control of the restive horse by this time, Lewis saw, too, the friendly individual, whom he was surprised and pleased to see was

a youth of about his own age and size. The daring boy held in his hands a firearm, with which he was menacing the dismayed natives in a manner that showed his determination of purpose.

"Begone, Loneau!" continued the youth, "before it is too late. I am in no mood for idle talk," and the stern expression on his handsome countenance showed that he spoke the truth. As young as he was, there was that about him which seemed to prove his ability to make good any threat he might declare.

The Hawaiians evidently knew him, and dared not trifle with him, for with sullen looks and muttered words they skulked away.

Finding himself thus easily and unexpectedly freed of their dangerous presence, Lewis turned to thank his young preserver, saying:

"I want to thank you for saving my life. I want to know your name."

"Wait a minute and I will be with you," when the other rapidly descended the rounded hill, and in a moment was beside him.

"Ride down the valley, and while I walk beside you we can talk. There are other natives a short distance off, and though I have frightened their leaders off, the whole mob may soon make an attack. What their reason for doing it is more than I can imagine, for you are beyond question a stranger on the island."

"I came on the ship this afternoon, and was on my way to find the friends where I expected to stop, when I was decoyed to this place and waylaid, as you must have seen. I cannot understand it."

"Neither can I. I had been watching you for some

time, and was wondering how I was going to save you from the trap into which you were running so innocently. I can see you are, like myself, an American. What is your name? I am sure we shall be friends, for the tie of race should bring us together at this time if at no other."

The speaker held out his hand as he spoke, and, grasping it, his new-found acquaintance said:

"My name is Lewis Hiland, and —"

"Not Lew Hiland who was my playmate in old Headley!" cried the surprised youth. "I cannot believe my eyes. So you have come to Hawaii, Lew, af—"

It was Lewis's turn to interrupt, and, slipping from the back of the horse, he threw his arms about his companion, crying, joyously:

"You are Ned!"

"As true as you live, Lew," and the long-separated friends, thus strangely united, clasped each other in a long, close embrace, while they sobbed like children, though it was for joy. Lewis was the first to speak.

"I am the happiest boy in the world, though I cannot fully realise that I have really found you, Ned. Do you know I thought I should never find my way to your home. When I asked people where you lived they answered me in such a way and looked so queer I could not understand what they meant. What could it mean, Ned?"

"I am so glad to meet you, Lew, and yet so sorry I wrote you as I did! Alas! I did not dream then what was coming so soon. Lew, I am under a great sorrow, and I am afraid I have brought you into trouble. You must not remain with me if you value your life and safety."

Perhaps unconsciously Ned Merriweather had stepped

back, and now stood looking at Lewis with a light in his eye his friend could not understand. The dark hints which had been thrown out to him by those he had met now came to him with intensified meaning, and all at once a horrible suspicion flashed through his mind. In his study of Hawaii he remembered then that, notwithstanding the bright picture the seven isles had presented, a deep shadow lay over all. Very many of the people were lepers, and those not already touched with the terrible scourge were in danger of receiving it from contamination with the hopeless victims. The Merriweathers had fallen under this blighting curse. He saw now an explanation for the conduct of those who had acted so strangely when he had spoken of the family. The very thought of this awful affliction sent such a chill through his frame as to nearly overcome him.

Having come to this natural conclusion, Lew felt at a loss how to broach the matter to Ned, whom he had found to possess a genial nature, and whom he had already begun to like with more than ordinary friendship.

"It is indeed sad, Ned. I pity you and your family."

"So you have been told all about it?"

"I have not been told so very much, Ned, but I have read of the disease and I know something of its horror. I —"

"Disease, Lew? What do you mean? Speak out plain."

"The — the leprosy, Ned! I have read that those who have it are very sensitive about speaking of it."

The look on Ned Merriweather's frank countenance had changed, although his companion found it harder to read than before. Catching Lewis by the arm, he cried:

"Who told you that, Lew? Was not the truth bad enough?"

"I — no one told me, Ned. But I thought — there *is*

something wrong! Tell me what it is that I may share it with you."

Under less severe tension Ned Merriweather must have smiled at the incoherent speech and manner of his new-found friend. As it was, he simply said:

"It is not that, Lew. But here we are standing and tempting those poor fools to attack us. Leave the horse to shift for himself. I judge he is not yours. We can go where we wish better on foot; follow me."

Lewis released his hold on the rein, and leaving the horse to clip the succulent grass at its own free will, he kept close behind Ned, who was advancing at a rapid gait toward the lowlands.

"It is odd you should think we were lepers, Lew," said Ned at last.

"I hope you will forgive me, Ned; but I cannot even now understand what all this mystery means. Tell me."

"It is not much that I can tell you, but that is fraught with great evil. Father, mother, and sister have all suddenly disappeared from home, and search where I will I can find no trace of them. I fear — I seem to know that bodily harm has been done them long before this. And I am so helpless to save them!"

CHAPTER VI.

NED'S STORY.

THOUGH Lewis felt keenly the loss sustained by his friend, the situation did not prove any worse than he had been led to expect. In fact, he saw a more hopeful picture than the words of his companion really warranted, and he said:

"You are not sure they have been harmed, Ned, so they may be safe at this moment. Are you sure they have been kidnapped? Have they not been called suddenly away from home and did not have time to inform you where they were going?"

Ned Merriweather shook his head, and, without speaking, led the way in the direction of the lowlands.

"Please tell me all about it, Ned," said Lew, following at his heels.

Down through the dense tropical growth Ned pursued his course in silence, as if he could not find words to reply to his friend's question. For the first time Lewis saw that the sun was setting, overhung by a gorgeous cloud canopy of many hues. He realised, too, that the atmosphere now had a coolness resembling that of the temperate zone in mid-autumn.

If they were leaving the higher mountains in their sombre loneliness, they were still in a region where the wall-like

sides of the gray peaks rose high into the air, and the valleys were growing narrower and darker.

On the crest of one of the sharpest cliffs, which they had been obliged to scale, Lewis could not help stopping to admire the beautiful landscape spread before his view, while Ned stood silently by his side, his demeanour in apt keeping with the solemn grandeur of the bold escarpment. He could see that they were standing on what might be very appropriately styled the "backbone of Oahu." The mountain range, on one of the peaks of which he stood, cut the island from east to west into two nearly equal parts. He saw, too, that the half on his right — the south — was the inhabited portion, the seat of the busy metropolis and the sites of prosperous plantations scattered over its fair domain, while on the other hand lay the unreclaimed lands of a broken, mountainous district, with here and there patches of sugar-cane or tiny villages isolated from each other. Gigantic bodies of dark, iron-like rocks of volcanic origin reared their heads far and near, broken in the distance into splintered pinnacles of fantastic shapes, many with their dagger-like points piercing the cerulean sky. These relics of bygone fiery beds were made more picturesque by their skirts formed of the green foliage of the cocoa palm, banana-trees, and broad-bladed grasses everywhere abundant. Beyond the gray domes of this big amphitheatre of mountains, the coral reefs of the broad Pacific, its matchless blue blending softly with the far-reaching meshes of the surf, glimmered faintly in the vanishing light. The narrow valleys of this landscape were traced with occasional paths following zig-zag courses from the plains along the seacoast to the mountains, each eventually disappearing behind some frowning sentinel of the volcanic world. At that moment the con-

trast between the severed parts of the island was heightened by the falling of the oblique rays of the setting sun, which shone with a beautiful halo over all of the southern half, while the mountain range shut out its light from the northern side, making the one very truthfully a realm of sunshine, and the semi-solitude of the other a region of shadow.

Lewis had really seen all this in a brief moment, and seeing now that Ned was beginning to descend a narrow, winding path leading to the foot of the wall a thousand feet below, he started to follow him with a feeling of fear he could not shake off, for the way was treacherous to unused feet.

Seeing his hesitation in treading boldly the pathway which common use had robbed of its terrors to him, Ned slackened his gait.

"We haven't much farther to go," he said. "Then I will explain all. This is called the *Pali*, which word rendered into English means very truthfully the 'wall-like precipice.' This is a historic spot and a great resort for tourists. It was here, as the story is told, that Kamehameha, the Conqueror and Napoleon of Hawaii, fought the final battle which made him king of the seven isles. Oahu was the last to yield, and, after a hard fight on the plains, Kamehameha succeeded in driving his enemies back to this place. Here the handful of survivors made a desperate stand, but, discouraged and outnumbered, they were soon forced to the alternative of being pushed from the rocky wall into the chasm, or of voluntarily leaping to death on the stony floor nearly a thousand feet below. The majority heroically sought this fate, while a few — a very few — escaped.

"But this is too gruesome a story to tell at this time. Here is my stopping-place for the present, though to-morrow

I shall change, for I saw a native prowling about in a suspicious manner only this afternoon."

As he finished speaking, Ned paused at a rift in the volcanic rock, and under the overhanging shelf Lewis saw spread on the hard floor a grass mat, while near by was the remnant of the last meal eaten there by his companion.

"Sit down, Lew; the mat is large enough for two. Unless you are exceptionally hungry, we will not think of eating until we have given mutual explanations. I suppose you are wondering why I am living here instead of in my comfortable home."

"Yes, Ned; go ahead. Your story is of more account than mine. I am anxious to know what all this means."

"Well, you see it is like this. I was away from home on the day before yesterday, from early morning until about this time. Father had said nothing of going away when I had left, but when I got home the house was deserted. At first I thought he had gone out for a ride with mother and sister, but I soon came to a different conclusion. Not only were the folks, but everybody else about the place was missing, and I believed foul play of some kind had been enacted. The horses were left, but the several natives father employed were gone. The lawn in front of the house was considerably torn up, as if a struggle had taken place there. I cannot realise even now that father had an enemy in the kingdom who would treat him so. He was noted for his generous treatment of the natives. Still, I was obliged to act as if he with mother and sister Grace had been carried off captives. Of course it was a bold movement to do that in broad daylight, but our plantation stands alone, and is so hidden by trees as not to be seen until one is close upon it. If it

had been done by the natives, as I believed, it was nothing surprising, when I come to think it all over.

"Not knowing who else to turn to in my trouble, I sought the American minister that evening. He declared at once that father had been kidnapped by royal command. You have not been here long enough to know anything of the bitterness of feeling existing between certain factions of the inhabitants. The Americans are naturally not satisfied with the existing form of government, and are anxious to bring a closer connection with the United States. The queen and her subjects are, of course, opposed to anything of the kind. The other races on the islands are what might be called neutral in regard to the matter, though nearly all secretly look unfavourably on the purpose of the Americans.

"Father has been quite outspoken in his ideas, but not to an extent to lose him the friendship of the queen, who seems very liberal in her actions, considering her critical situation. So Mr. Stevens and I could not agree, though that did not interfere with our doing all we could toward finding the missing ones. He went to the queen, who denied all knowledge of the affair, and promised to do what she could toward helping us. Mr. Stevens convinced me of the fact that the queen is suspicious of every newcomer who is an American, and that if she is not watching them some one of her followers is. I am working cautiously, and keeping out of sight as much as possible. I have satisfied myself that they are not in Oahu."

"Then you have gained a good start, and with my help may soon find them."

"I hope so, but you must not incur the risk. No — no! you had better keep out of it. I know of a place where you

"A PROCESSION OF HORSEMEN . . . WAS SLOWLY CLIMBING THE DIZZY PATHWAY."

can stay in safety until this trouble blows over for better or worse. I —"

"Ned Merriweather, I will not hear a word like that. I am here to help you if it is in my power. I have come to make my future home with you, and I should be indeed a coward and a traitor if I did not help you defend it. Our interests —"

Ned held up his hand warningly, beginning to creep to the edge of the rock, Lewis keeping close beside him. If the latter was at a loss to know the meaning of his companion's stealthy actions, he was soon in possession of the key to the mystery.

On the opposite or east side of the Pali a steep, rugged path wound around the rocky wall, affording the only way of passage from the valley of Nuuanu and the region of mountains. Over this rough pathway the natives of Oahu had for years passed to and fro empty-handed, or with huge calabashes filled with such products as they had to market, or the goods received in return for offerings swung over their backs.

At this time, however, it was no party of peaceful if rude husbandmen, but a procession of horsemen, of a decidedly war-like appearance, that was slowly climbing the dizzy pathway. The leader of these at once caught the gaze of Lewis, as a more remarkable person than any of his followers, who were all Hawaiians.

This man presented such an appearance as he had never seen, and was a sight he would not forget for many a day. He showed, as he sat bolt upright in his high-pommelled saddle, that he was tall and powerful, with the air of one born to command. But it was no more his perfect military figure which dazzled the boyish beholder than it was his

gorgeous array. His bright uniform fairly scintillated with gold-lace trimmings and buttons. Long-legged boots, innocent of dirt or blemish, encased his lower limbs, while shining silver spurs shone in the twilight like twin stars. Over his cap, with its wide band of gold and bronze, flaunted a feather plume of a deep bronze hue. This magnificent-looking personage, with a sword clanking at his left side, was mounted on the finest horse Lewis had seen since he had reached Oahu.

Even the striking appearance of this haughty soldier was not all Lewis saw to hold his attention to the entire forgetfulness of the rest of the train. He was an American.

"Who is he, Ned?"

The latter was too absorbed in an altogether different feature of the little cavalcade to notice the anxious inquiry, and a stern expression came over his youthful countenance as he said, in a low tone:

"Another poor victim of oppression. Who can he be? I am sure I never saw him before. Did you speak, Lew?"

"Who is that ahead, Ned?"

"The one with the uniform? That is Gustavus Marks, the captain of the queen's body-guard, as she calls her mounted soldiers."

"He is an American, Ned."

"I know it, but he seems all the more bitter against the rights of his countrymen. At one time he was one of the loudest annexationists, but he was found to be crooked in his ways, when he suddenly left his party and joined the queen's forces, to become one of her most active and radical followers. He is making himself disliked by even the more conservative followers of the queen. I never liked the appearance of the man, and I know no friendship existed between him and

father. You saw that captive bound to the fourth horse in the train, Lew?"

"A captive? I am ashamed to say I saw nothing but that dark-looking rider of the black horse. I — never mind, Ned. What is it about the captive?"

"There has been another crime committed against a peaceful citizen, or I am greatly mistaken. I did not recognise the prisoner, but I have an important item of news for Mr. Stevens. Marks is surely concerned in these abductions if the queen is not. But we are losing valuable time. I have a little left of my last meal; we will eat that, and then I will be on the move. I will not rest until I have found my folks, and rescued them if they are alive."

"I am with you, Ned, to the end."

CHAPTER VII.

A ROYAL SUMMONS.

AS the boys partook of the food Ned provided they both relapsed into silence, the mind of each busy with thoughts they could not well put aside. Lewis was thinking of the dashing captain of the queen's body-guard.

"Somewhere and at some time I have seen him before!" he said, unconsciously speaking aloud.

"What's that you are saying, Lew? Seems to me we have been awful glum. If you will persist in going with me, you must unlimber your tongue and prepare to meet the worst as best you can. I can see we are going into a big hornets' nest, and we may get stung so we shall never come out. You're not used to roughing it as I am. Better turn back, Lew, before it is too late."

"You do not know me as well as you will before we get through with this, Ned. My mind was fully made up, and you cannot frighten me into changing it. What are your plans?"

"Good for you, Lew. Well, in the first place I want to take one look more at the old place. I know of a man who will watch over it while I am away. I want to see him. Then I shall be ready to resume my search for father, mother, and sister. As I am very certain they are not on this island I shall leave for Maui as soon as possible. After that, passing events must shape my course of action."

"Let us lose no more time," replied Lew.

Upon leaving the Pali, the boys found that, though night had fairly set in, it was not dark enough to hinder them in their advance, as they walked briskly toward the Nuuanu valley. Finally Ned turned from the main road to Honolulu into another leading toward the west.

"Father preferred to get away from the town," said Ned, "and as good land is found nearer the mountains, his was one of the largest and best sugar plantations in Oahu."

As they continued, the houses stood farther and farther apart, though Lewis could see they bore the appearance of their owners' prosperity. Rows of palm-trees almost continually towered over their heads, while fields of rice or sugar-cane were to be seen on either hand.

Lewis was wondering how much farther they must go when Ned turned into the leaf-embowered lawn of one of the most pretentious dwellings they had seen. Ned had evidently forgotten his own words in regard to being glum, for he had not spoken for ten minutes. Now he said, simply:

"This is my home. How still it seems!"

Lewis followed him in silence, a feeling of oppression which he could not shake off weighing down his spirits. Ned went straight to the wide veranda, with its festoons of sweet-scented vines hanging with many-hued flowers, but he stopped suddenly with a low exclamation of surprise.

"Some one has been here!" he whispered, pointing toward an open door. "Hark! I thought I heard some one move within the house."

They both listened for a minute or more, but not a sound broke the silence of the scene, save the sharp whir from the wings of a night insect flying swiftly past their heads.

"I am going in," said Ned, finally. "Do you remain here and keep a sharp lookout that no one comes out."

The next moment Ned disappeared within the house, the sound of his retreating footsteps heard by Lewis for a short time, and then all became silent again about the premises.

Fully five minutes, which seemed like half an hour to Lewis, passed, and Ned had not returned. Getting tired of his inactivity, the watcher at the door began to pace slowly and noiselessly back and forth, being careful not to get more than five or six feet either way from his post of duty.

Lewis had thus reached the bounds of his short beat on the right at his third round, when he fancied he caught sight of a figure moving rapidly under the mango grove a few rods below the house. At first sight he took this form to be some four-footed creature, but he soon satisfied himself it was the crouching figure of a man, who was skulking along with the evident desire of keeping out of sight as much as possible.

Quickly gaining the cover of a clump of bushes, this form disappeared, when a second and then a third came into sight and went out in the same manner. He could see them plain enough to know they were natives, and their actions showed that they were bent on no honest purpose.

His first thought was to find Ned, and tell him of what was taking place, but disliking to leave his post he waited for further developments, keeping his eyes and ears open. He was standing in the open doorway on the point of going after Ned, when a sharp cry rang through the house, as if some one was in peril. It sounded like his friend's voice, and hesitating no longer he plunged into the darkness of the building.

A stranger to the house, Lewis had not gone three steps

before he ran plump into something in his pathway, and he had no sooner cleared this obstacle than he encountered another. Thus his progress was slow and perplexing. He called Ned by his name, but got no response. It was as still as ever about the place.

"Ned, Ned! where are you?" he shouted. Getting no reply and realising that he was not likely to find him in that blundering way, he started to return to the door. This was no easy matter in the darkness, but at last he found himself again in the open air.

As he stepped over the threshold he was confronted by a couple of uniformed men, who had stationed themselves on the veranda like sentries on duty during his brief absence. At sight of him the foremost raised his firearm to a level of his breast, saying, sharply:

"Stand, young man, at the peril of your life!"

Lewis, amazed at this unexpected situation, was better prepared to obey than to do anything else. In a minute, however, he demanded:

"What does this mean?"

"Silence, sir! You are our prisoner. Will you come quietly, or shall we have to gag and bind you?"

"I will go peacefully, sir, if I know whither I am to be taken. I am a stranger here and have done no—"

"Enough, sir, that you know you are the one we want. Her royal Majesty demands an interview with the young American who came to Honolulu this afternoon. You are he?"

"I came here on the *Pink of the Pacific*."

"Just as we thought, so you must come with us. Royal orders are not to be ignored, but if all reports are true this will be the last time you will be so honoured."

Lewis refrained from making any reply, realising that it would be useless. He saw now a body of horsemen advancing from the background, and he knew it would be folly for him to offer any resistance. What the queen could want of him was more than he could understand, though he resolved to meet his fate with as good grace as possible. He wondered where Ned was at that moment, and how it was faring with him.

In the midst of his reflections he was rudely seized by the soldiers, and led out where their mounted companions were in waiting for them. Then he was ordered to climb up behind one of the riders, and warned that the least attempt at escape would sign his doom. A little later the horsemen started down the road in single file at a smart canter.

Little dreaming of what he was to pass through before he should behold the place again, Lewis felt a heavy load at his heart as he took a last look at the deserted plantation. But he was thinking more of Ned than of himself.

CHAPTER VIII.

OBEYING STRANGE ORDERS.

SOON losing sight of the Merriweather plantation, the troopers and their prisoner rode on toward Honolulu at a sweeping pace. The rapid riding allowing no conversation, the only sound which came to Lewis's ear was the steady thud, thud, thud of the horses' feet. His mind was too deeply engrossed with the revelations and experiences of the few hours he had been in Oahu for him to observe with any closeness their advance. He saw that the houses grew more numerous as they kept on, until he realised they were entering one of the suburbs of the capital.

In the midst of his confused thoughts and speculations the little party slackened its headlong advance, and Lewis found that they were entering the spacious grounds of the finest premises he had seen since coming to Honolulu.

He saw a large, modern-looking structure rising with snow-white walls in the centre of a beautiful park, which was encircled by rows of magnificent palm and orange trees and vistas of bright-coloured flowers, whose blossoms were of prodigious size. The plain, square sides of this white palace were set off by a prodigal display of windows set in deep casings and highly ornamented balconies, while towers had been built at each end of the façades. The roof was crowned with a cupola, from which flaunted the flag of Hawaii.

Lewis rightly judged that this place was the queen's capitol, and this conclusion was strengthened by the appearance of foot-soldiers, who came forward to take charge of him. As he was being marched away, he saw in the background the richly uniformed Capt. Gustavus Marks in earnest conversation with the leader of the party which had effected his capture. He could not hear what was said, but it was evidently something in regard to him, for he was immediately after escorted into the interior of the white palace.

Still hopeful, Lewis believed he was about to be taken before the queen, though he was soon aware of his mistake. His conductors hurried him along one of the wide halls, until coming to a door near the farther end, when he was pushed into the adjoining apartment and shut in.

He was still free of limb, but one of his military escorts remained with him, and as the other soldier closed the door and locked it, he realised that he was a prisoner.

The soldier left with him was a low-browed, swarthy-hued man, who began to pace sullenly back and forth, his small, bead-like eyes constantly upon him. There was one window to the room, but that was up higher than his head, and he could see little or no chance of escape. At any rate, he concluded it was better for him to wait until a more propitious time before resisting his captors. After all, it was possible no harm was intended him. Seeing his guard was not disposed to speak, he finally broke the silence.

"Sir, I am a stranger and do not understand what is wanted of me. I beg of you to tell me what this treatment means."

The pale starlight struggling into the small window enabled him to see his guard give an ominous shake of the head.

That was the only indication he received that the other had even heard him. After half a dozen vain attempts to get a word from the man, Lewis wisely relapsed into silence, his thoughts more busy than ever with the mysterious problem concerning his present situation. Where was Ned? and what would he think had become of him? He blamed himself some for the stupid manner in which he had fallen into the hands of his enemies.

It must have been an hour past midnight, and Lewis was well-nigh worn out with waiting for what he knew not, when the door opened, and he saw two armed men entering the room. Believing that harm was intended him, he was about to resist any attack from them, when his guardsman threw his strong arms around his shoulders, and bore him to the floor. The others lost no time in binding his hands and feet, a gag was thrust into his mouth, and a blindfold was placed over his eyes.

In this helpless condition he was borne from the apartment, and a breath of fresh air soon after striking his cheek revealed to him the fact that he had been carried out of the building. He was then lifted upon the back of a horse, when the strangest ride of his life was begun. He had read of mysterious abductions, but none which seemed to equal this. What did it mean? Were these men, who appeared to be subjects of the queen, going to take him to some torture or death? Or was it some wild scheme to get money? He quickly put the last idea aside as utterly preposterous. They, his captors, must know he had no money with which to pay a ransom. He knew that the queen was very rich and had had no need to obtain money in that way. It must be for another reason that he was being taken to an unknown fate.

Judging by the sounds of the hoof strokes, he was accompanied by at least half a dozen. Deprived of his sight, Lewis's other sense became unusually acute, and he was certain they rode for several miles along a nearly level route. At the end of that time he found that they were ascending a winding, precipitous path, and thoughts of the Pali instantly came into his mind. On the opposite side of this ridge the course again became nearly smooth and level for a long, long distance, until the sound of the sea, beating on the shore in low murmurs its perpetual song, filled his ears. The party paused at the edge of the water.

Still maintaining the silence they had observed during the journey so far, his escorts lifted him from the horse into a boat. A short consultation then took place between different portions of the men, and then he knew by the sounds and the motions of the slight craft that they were leaving the shore. He was certain that not all of the horsemen had entered the boat, but how many had remained behind he could not tell. There seemed to be three or four with him, and these soon began to converse in a low tone, though their conversation did not seem to refer in any way to him.

Aware that he must be a long distance from Honolulu, Lewis felt that each moment must be taking him farther and farther away from the capital of the island kingdom. He soon began to feel the warm rays of the sun falling obliquely upon him, and lying in the bottom of the boat so the sea-breeze did not refresh him, he suffered greatly from the heat.

Still quietly and steadily the men sent the boat on its way until it must have been near midday, when the regular dip of their paddles ceased, and with a severe shock the slight craft came to a sudden stop. The men jumped out, and he

was lifted from his uncomfortable position upon the ground. Before he had recovered from the numbness felt by lying in a cramped position so long, he felt the ligatures binding his lower limbs fall away, and a thrill of hope went through his frame. But this was quickly dispelled by the words of one of the men :

"We've got tired of lugging you around, captain, so you must do a little walking. But I advise you not to get up any high hopes about running away from us. Remember we are all here. Now, forward, march!"

Walking with great difficulty, Lewis was forced to keep beside his captors. At last, to his joy, a halt was called, and the men began to talk among themselves. After a short consultation and some preparations made which he could not understand, Lewis was addressed by the same spokesman as before :

"I am going to take that rag out of your mouth, captain, as I want you to answer me a question," when Lewis found his mouth free from the terrible wedge which had left his jaw for the time stiff and helpless.

"Where are you, captain?" was the unexpected question asked by his captor. The man got impatient before Lewis could manage to articulate :

"You cannot expect me to tell you, sir. Why mock me in my distress? I never injured you."

"I am not doing this for myself, captain. You are Lewis Hiland, the American who came to live with James Merriweather?"

"My name is Lewis Hiland, sir. I am a peaceful American —"

"Being of a peaceful nature you will gladly leave Hawaii at once?"

"I do not understand you, sir."

"I will try and make myself understood. If your intentions are good, you have fallen into bad company. You are believed to be an enemy to the peace of Hawaii. But the queen is ever merciful and her supporters are generous to a high degree. Had this not been the case we should not have been to all this trouble for a stranger. You are young and must value life. Promise that you will leave here at once — a boat is waiting to take you away — and you shall go in safety, but never to return. Refuse, and in five minutes your fate will be sealed. I wait your reply, which cannot be changed after it has been given."

This was spoken in a blunt, impressive tone, and it was some time before Lewis could say:

"I cannot believe the queen of Hawaii considers me her enemy. I have done no plotting. I am no meddler with that which does not concern me. There has been some mistake."

"Then it is your loss, but not my fault. My orders were to give you one chance for your life. I have been to all this trouble to do it. Which shall it be: life away from Hawaii, or a grave in its lava beds?"

CHAPTER IX.

A LIFE BRAVELY STAKED.

LIFE, with all the attractions it holds for the young, was dear to Lewis. He thought of his friends — those who were very near to him — and it seemed hard never to see them again. To be taken away in this dark, mysterious manner appeared worse to him than dying at home among those he loved. If he should refuse to accept the terms of life offered him by his captors, would his fate ever be known to his friends? With these reflections came others of a sterner, more inflexible nature. He recalled his promise to Ned, uttered hastily it might have been, but spoken nevertheless from the heart, and to yield to these unknown men seemed like treachery to him. How would he feel leaving in that cowardly way the land to which he had come hoping to find a home, and deserting those needing his aid in the hour of trouble? With such thoughts as these his mind was very active during the brief interval allowed him for an answer to the most momentous question, which meant life or death.

"Do you intend to keep me waiting for your answer all day?" demanded the man, impatiently. "According to my idea, there is no need of hesitation. You can have but one reply. We will speedily take you to a port from which you can get passage to any part of the world you wish to go. We could have put you afloat from Honolulu, but we did not

care to do that, and I may as well tell you that our watch over you will not end until you are fairly away from these islands. See the trouble and anxiety you have put us to. To speak the truth, we had rather you would say 'no' to my question, as it would save us lots of bother. Up here in these wilds are a party of crazy heathens who are eager to add you to their list of sacrifices. But we are losing valuable time. I will give you one minute longer, — no more. I hold my watch in my hand."

Spoken in a cold, matter-of-fact tone, this speech sent a shudder through Lew's body. The darkness in which he was enveloped added to the terror of his situation. How he longed to look upon the speaker, — upon his surroundings!

"You will at least tell me what this is for? Why — "

"I am under oath to tell you nothing. What good would it do if I were not? But your time flies. Two-thirds of the minute is already gone. I will count the remaining seconds, beginning at five — six — seven — eight — nine — home — friends — twelve — thirteen — life — death — sixteen — seventeen — one — word — decides! Time's up!" declared the speaker, while Lew could only imagine the merciless look on his stern features.

"I cannot leave Hawaii," he began, but was not allowed to finish the sentence, which had already expressed a complete thought.

"Enough!" exclaimed the other. "I have done more than my duty, and the consequence must rest on your own head."

These words were followed by a shrill whistle, which caused Lew to start with alarm, and immediately he heard footsteps approaching. Then the grasp on his shoulder was released, but it was quickly replaced by another, which

pinched him like a vise. A few hurried words in a tone too low for him to catch were spoken by one of those around him, and a reply given in the same cautious voice, and then he was again urged forward. He was sure some change had been made in his escort, though beyond that meagre fact he was as much in ignorance as ever.

Of one thing he was soon certain. Those now leading him were in more haste than his previous conductors. He was led on, at what seemed to him a rapid gait, so that often he could not avoid stumbling, when he would be jerked to his feet with violence, and dragged on at greater impetuosity than before. He was glad that the gag had not been put back into his mouth, and several times he was on the point of addressing his captors, but each time he refrained from speaking, fearing that by so doing he might cause them to replace the thing of torture.

The way grew rougher, as they proceeded, and up, up, up, until he became aware that they were descending. As this descent continued for some time he concluded that they had crossed a range of hills. Having learned enough of Hawaii to know that these ridges always trended from the shore inland, he felt certain that they had changed their course. He judged from the way the rays of the sun had fallen on him that they had landed on the eastern shore of the island. Thus their advance had been in a westerly direction at first, and according to this they were now going north or south. As the sun was now to his back, or rather over his left shoulder, he decided that they were pursuing a northerly direction. Of what avail his reasoning would be was past his comprehension, but his mind was very active, and if deprived of his sight, his other senses were uncommonly acute.

The old saying, "While there is life there is hope," proved true in his case. Finding that he had escaped immediate death, which he had expected, his courage rose. But the furious pace at which they were going over the rough surface of the earth, often through masses of tangled undergrowth, finally began to tire him. If he dared to hold back, some sharp-pointed instrument in the hands of his captors instantly prodded him in a way which would cause him to start ahead with renewed vigour.

He was beginning to feel that he must give up, let the consequence be what it might, when he was again conscious of a change in the surface of the ground. They were no longer climbing or descending a hill, but moving over a comparatively level plain as smooth as a house floor. At first he felt certain they had reached one of the lava beds at the foot of one of the volcanoes, but he was soon undeceived in that respect. Ever and anon his legs were brushed by long, pliant switches, as it seemed, though he soon came to the conclusion that the "switches" were nothing more nor less than stalks of the native grasses, specimens of which he had seen growing on the island of Oahu. If this were true, as he had no reason to doubt, he was now being taken across one of the fertile valleys for which the islands were noted, and the course was still northerly.

So far his captors had not spoken, except in low exclamations, which he could not understand. But from these he had learned that they were natives. The soft, musical inflection to their voices, as well as their language, had told him this. Then, in the midst of their hurried advance, an exclamation of fright fell from the lips of one of them, and a halt was made so abruptly as almost to send him upon his knees.

He was not left long to wonder over this sudden movement, for a deep, hoarse, bellowing sound, growing louder and clearer as it continued, was borne on the clear air from what seemed a long distance, bringing renewed exclamations of terror from those around him, and the hands clutching him trembled.

The first roar had not fairly died away before it was succeeded by another more terrific. He felt himself suddenly jerked forward, as his guards started to flee, and he was hurled headlong upon the earth. They did not stop to help him upon his feet, but letting him go, they hurriedly left the place. As the sound of their retreating footsteps came to his ears, Lew heard the third outcry in the distance, nearer and louder this time than before! What it was making such a noise was more than he could tell, but of one thing he was already sure: the thing or creature was approaching!

Having for the present, at least, escaped his captors, he quickly regained his feet, and the most natural thing in the world for him to do was to begin to wrestle with his bonds. But the stout ligatures had been too securely fastened to allow him to obtain his freedom, and his efforts only caused the sharp cord to cut into his wrists until the blood flowed. Still, slight wounds did not count in moments like that, and he struggled with more frantic energy than ever, until another roar, so near that it sent a thrill of terror through his frame, caused him to stop.

Listening a moment, he fancied he could hear the tread of heavy feet not far away! From his knowledge of Hawaii he knew there was no native animal on the islands that man need fear. But here was some big, furious creature rushing toward him with every indication of taking his life and trampling over his mangled body! In his helplessness it is not

a wonder if he uttered a despairing cry, and turned to flee. His flight, however, did not continue long. Unable to see where he was going, he soon stumbled and fell prone on the ground.

His attempt to escape seemed to arouse the unknown beast to renewed rage, for it roared yet louder and fiercer than it had before, and lying there Lew felt the earth tremble beneath the strokes of its feet, as if it was pounding the ground out of sheer madness. He was confident it was a creature of great size, and soon finding that it was approaching him at a furious rate, he thought of again trying to flee, when, as a drowning person catches at a straw, he resolved upon a desperate experiment.

Somewhere in his reading of the habits and instincts of wild beasts, he had learned that nothing has so great power over them as something which excites their curiosity. The wildest creature had been known to stop abruptly in its course at the sight of an object which startled it by its oddity. Could not he in this way check the approach of his unknown, and therefore the more to be dreaded, enemy? But how was he to do it? The thought had come like a flash into his mind, and he was not given much time in which to perfect a plan. The prolonged bellowing of the infuriated brute proclaimed its sure and rapid pursuit. He instantly resolved to hazard his life upon a bold device.

He had regained his feet, but he quickly dropped upon his knees, and then sank upon his back as squarely as he could for his bound hands. With such strength as the excitement of the situation gave him, he threw his feet into the air, and the next moment he was supporting himself in an inverted position upon his shoulders and the back of his neck. Tied as his hands were, he could not rise upon his

head, but he came nearer to the feat than he had expected it possible, and, shaking his feet above him, he awaited the result.

The pounding of heavy feet upon the ground instantly ceased, and not a sound broke the deathlike stillness. The strange creature was watching him, wondering, no doubt, what sort of an animal he was. Then the brief suspense was broken by a roar of such volume as to nearly take away his breath, and he felt that he was no longer feared by the other. A dull, scraping sound, as of some hard substance passing over another, and he waited with breathless interest for the next move of his enemy.

CHAPTER X.

CAUGHT AS A SPY.

LET us keep a square front to events by returning to the home of the Merriweathers, and see what Ned is doing all this time. You or I do not believe he was inactive. We left him as he entered the house, leaving Lew to do sort of guard duty while he was absent on his tour of inspection.

If Ned had at first thought it possible any one was in the house, the silence of the place quickly removed such an idea. Still he advanced cautiously, and being perfectly familiar with the way, as he should be in his own home, he passed swiftly from room to room, until he found himself at the door of a small apartment in the extreme rear of the rambling building, and which opened out upon a grove of orange and mango trees, reached by a beautiful walk bordered by twin rows of king palms. This little room had been his poor father's favourite retreat, and here he had passed many pleasant hours reading the books his father had selected for him. Mr. Merriweather was a man of good education; was, in fact, what might be termed a man of letters. It had been his intention that Ned should attend some good college in the States, as our country is called in Hawaii.

As Ned crossed the threshold of this apartment he was surprised to see a dark figure rise from the floor in the distant corner, and start swiftly for a door leading out into

the open air. A glance showed him that this man was a native, and he ordered him to stop in no unmistakable tone. Yet the command was unheeded by the fleeing intruder, who redoubled his efforts to reach the door. Ned might have shot him, for he carried his firearm, but he had no desire to resort to such desperate measures. He was as near to the place of exit as the other, and with a bound he was in front of the frightened Hawaiian, who uttered the shrill cry heard by Lew, and then dropped upon his knees, with one hand raised toward him in supplication.

The bars of moonlight which came in at the open door enabled Ned to see the features of the native clear enough to recognise him. With not a little amazement he discovered in him one of his father's help, a Hawaiian, who had done odd jobs about the plantation for two or three years. He had not been considered a thief or a troublesome person, and what his errand there at this time could be was more than he could conjecture. As he sternly looked down on the other, he demanded:

"What are you doing here, Lau?"

"Nuffin, master. I'se going 'way as fast as I can."

"As soon as you saw me. What is that in your hand, Lau?"

This pointed question carried greater terror to the heart of the Hawaiian than the other, and, uttering unintelligible cries, he threw himself at Ned's feet.

"Stop all this nonsense, Lau. Your actions show that you were here for no honest purpose. Who gave you permission to take that image away?" for Ned had seen that the object which the Hawaiian was hugging so closely to his body was an odd specimen of native carving that his father had picked up near one of the ruined temples on the island

of Maui. One of the converted Hawaiians had acknowledged that it was a god belonging to the old form of pagan worship, but beyond that nothing could be learned regarding his strange find, which Mr. Merriweather had kept as a rare curiosity. Lau now clung to it as if his life depended upon it, while he replied to Ned's question in broken speech :

"Me come home — me find house empty — me come in — all very still — no one here! Me going out — young Ned come and find poor Lau here."

"Did you not know that father and mother were gone?"

"No. Where they gone?"

"Be careful, Lau. I think you know more than you would tell. What were you going to do with that image?"

At that moment Ned thought he heard his name called by Lew. But the sound came so indistinctly to him that he thought he must have been mistaken, so he listened for its repetition, stepping toward the inner door as he did so. The moment he did this Lau was on his feet, and he bounded out into the night like a rocket, only rockets are never terrified and he was.

Ned turned in season to see his figure disappearing down between the tall king palms, and he felt vexed with himself that he had allowed the native to escape so easily, especially as he had carried with him the highly prized image.

"Let him go!" he exclaimed aloud. "I thought I heard Lew call my name. I must see what is up in front of the house," a feeling that something was wrong with his friend coming into his heart.

Without longer delay he retraced his course, the hoof strokes of horses' feet reaching his ears as he advanced. Confident now that all was not well with Lew, he sped with swifter steps toward the spot where he had left him. The

sound of horses galloping rapidly down the road came to him as he gained the veranda. Lew was not to be seen! He called his name in a low tone, but got no reply.

"Those horsemen!" he exclaimed. "They have carried him off! What a dunce I have been! Oh, Lew! to think I should let you be taken off right under my nose. I wish I had a horse to follow you. Stay! there is my bicycle. On that I can easily keep in track of them."

Fortunately, Ned was the owner of a fairly good bicycle, and he was an apt rider. Knowing the importance of improving every moment, he hastened to where he kept the machine, to find it safe and sound. Wheeling it out into the path, he sprang into the saddle, and, in less than a minute, he was rapidly leaving the grounds. It was light enough for him to speed swiftly along the smooth road, and he soon had the satisfaction of discovering the forms of the horsemen he was pursuing. It was now an easy matter for him to carry out his purpose, and, being careful not to get near enough so as to arouse any suspicions the bold kidnappers might entertain, he followed them to the Nuuanu Valley highway, along this past the mausoleum of the Kamehamehas, over the bridge at the edge of the city, around the corner of the broad avenue, until the white palace loomed up before his gaze.

"Just as I expected," he thought. But so far he had not been able, or had not thought it best, to get near enough to see if Lew was really among the night riders. If he was going to prove this to his satisfaction, it was high time he did so, and though the queen's soldiers were riding at their usual breakneck speed, he spurted, and, as they dashed into the grounds, he rode past them, discovering Lew in their midst. Doubtless thinking he was only some ordinary

bicyclist out for a late spin, the soldiers kept on without turning their heads.

Having solved the mystery of his friend's disappearance, and confident that no harm would be done him until morning, Ned next thought of seeking Minister Stevens.

"I have proof now which cannot be gainsaid," he thought, as he rode silently on his way to the minister's unpretentious abode, knowing he would be most likely to find him there at this hour. But if the most likely place to look for him, Ned was disappointed at finding him away from home. Upon inquiry, he was told that he was expected in the course of an hour.

Anxious to improve every moment during this interval of waiting, for there was no one else to whom he cared to divulge his errand, Ned resolved to attend to a little matter which he had too long delayed. This was the carrying out of the purpose he had mentioned to Lew of getting some one to look after the homestead while he was away on his search for the missing ones. As this man lived only two miles away, he had ample time to see him and return before Mr. Stevens should get home.

He was pleased to find this Mr. Fenn, for that was his name, more in sympathy with him in his troubles than he had dared to expect, and he readily promised to assist him in every way he could.

"The whole affair is shameful," he declared. "No man on the island was more deserving of respect than your father. If Queen Lil doesn't look out she will allow her henchmen to get her into serious trouble. And now you say they — I say they, for I believe it is the work of that high-handed Marks and his tools — have taken a young friend of yours who has been here less than twenty-four

hours! That is what I call pretty quick work. Well, Stevens will set the matter right in a trice, unless there is something back of it all which we do not know. Come, rest here with me to-night, and to-morrow morning you can see Mr. Stevens, while I will take a run up to the old place."

Ned thanked him for his kind offer, but firmly declined to accept. He was anxious to see Mr. Stevens as soon as he should return. He expressed as much to Mr. Fenn, and was about to leave, when the latter said:

"I do not wonder that you are anxious. I only wish I could be of more assistance to you. I will keep my eyes and ears open, Ned, you may be sure of that. So you think of leaving Oahu to-morrow?"

"Unless this captivity of Lew hinders me. I do not feel like deserting him."

"Mr. Stevens will look after him better than you can. As soon as the queen finds out what has been done, if she does not know now, she will not dare to refuse to give him up. I will say what I started to a moment ago. How can I get word to you in case I should want to?"

"I have thought of that, and the best plan I can think of is for you to see Mr. Stevens, as I shall try to keep him posted. If he cannot inform you of my whereabouts, you had better send to Joel Place at Hilo. You remember Joel, who went from Honolulu to Hawaii two years ago?"

"Oh, yes; I knew Joel well."

"If I go to Hawaii, as I expect I shall have to, I shall try and find him. There, good-night."

"Good night, and good luck to you."

With the parting words of Mr. Fenn ringing in his ears, Ned pedalled back to the city in the hope that Mr. Stevens had returned to his home by this time. The evening was

unusually calm, and there was a languor about the atmosphere quite uncommon at this season. Little sign of life was to be seen on the streets, and the lights from houses here and there shone from out of their leafy bowers like stars struggling through a mass of thin clouds.

"Somehow I feel I am taking this trouble for nothing," he thought. "I don't know why it is but I can't help thinking that Minister Stevens is not going to help me out of this situation. Something tells me that I must depend on myself."

With such thoughts as these in his mind, the announcement that Mr. Stevens had not arrived at his home, but had sent word that he was not coming until the afternoon of the next day, had little if any impression on him.

"Have you any word to leave for him?"

"None," replied Ned, turning away from the house. "I may come to see him when he gets back. I cannot tell," adding to himself, as he departed:

"Now for the white palace, though for the world I do not know what I am going to do when I get there. It may be to seek an interview with the queen!"

In this frame of mind he silently approached the home of royalty, which presented quite a different sight from the simple abode of the American minister. As late as it was getting to be, he saw that considerable action was going on around the palace. Thinking there might be something learned to his benefit, he secreted his bicycle in the deep hedge surrounding the grounds, and stealthily approached the scene of activity.

He had not gone far before the sound of hoof-strokes near at hand warned him to be on his lookout, and drawing back into the deeper shadows, so as not to be observed, he waited

for the horsemen to come into sight, believing that it must be matters of more than common importance to call such a force out at this hour of the night. His suspense was of short duration, for he had barely taken his position before the riders came into plain sight. They were eight in number, and Ned came near giving expression to his surprise at beholding Lew in their midst.

This was in reality the party which was starting with Lew on that long, strange, and lonely ride, and Ned was trying to decide whether he should make a bold attempt to rescue his friend, or wait another opportunity, when a vise-like grip was laid on his arm, and a voice hissed into his ear:

"Come with me, youngster! It hasn't been long that we've harboured spies in sight of the royal palace."

CHAPTER XI.

A TIMELY DISCOVERY.

"DROP to the ground, Lew! I will look after the old stalker."

These words, uttered in a cheery voice, came to Lew's ears at the moment when he felt that his fate was sealed. There was a friendly and familiar ring in the tone which sent a thrill of joy to his heart. The great strain under which he had borne up gave way the moment he felt he had a deliverer at hand, and he collapsed, — fell in a heap on the ground. The report of a firearm sounded somewhat faintly in his ears, and then a roar, wilder and more terrific than any he had heard, awoke the temporary silence, followed by a series of hoarse bellows and groans of pain, and the sounds of a heavy body beating the ground.

"Get up, Lew!" cried the same friendly voice which had spoken before. "You have no more to fear, for the old fellow is as dead as a Chinaman in the House of Everlasting Fire."

It was Ned Merriweather! Bewildered and bound as he was, Lew staggered to his knees, crying:

"Oh, Ned, I am so glad you have come!"

By this time Ned had seen the helpless condition of his friend, and, running forward with his knife, he quickly cut the ligatures that bound Lew's arms, and then he tore off the bandage over his eyes.

"They left you in a pretty condition," he said, "and I didn't come a minute too soon. In sixty seconds more the old bull would have torn you limb from limb."

In his dazed, benumbed state Lew could only murmur his thanks, and intuitively he gazed in the direction of a huge form lying motionless on the plain a few rods away.

"Was it that bull which was making that terrible noise, and which I thought must be some frightful monster coming to destroy me?"

"The same, Lew; but you had reason for your alarm. To say nothing of being bound and blindfolded, I should not care to meet the old fellow when he was alive. He probably belongs to some herd of cattle running wild on the mountain-side, and he wandered off for a little adventure by himself. Well, I guess he got about as much as he bargained for!"

"It was being unable to see what was coming which seemed to make it so much worse. If I could only have seen it was a bull, instead of thinking it was some wild monster coming to devour me, I should have feared less."

"You underrate the danger of your situation, Lew. None of the cattle of Hawaii are more than half domesticated. Why I have seen cows that were milked which were as dangerous to approach as the majority of the wild animals of the forest. The only way any milk could be got from her was by letting her calf get his allowance at the same time she was milked by hand. These herds of cattle which run at their own free will on the mountains have some ferocious leaders. The old bulls, which are sometimes called 'stalkers,' are tough customers when they set out to be. But you seem all right now, and I want to tell you a bit of good news. I have got on the right track at last!"

Ned's countenance was wreathed in smiles, and he shook exultantly over his head a piece of dirty paper.

"Explain, Ned. I am as glad as you, only I want to know what it is for."

"It seems so strange I should stumble upon it, but here it is, and I tell you I feel better than I have for two days," handing to Lew, as he finished speaking, the strip of paper. "Read what it says, Lew, aloud. I can hardly believe my own eyes."

Lew then read the following message, which was without a date line, but which fortunately had the signature of the writer:

"I hand this young foreigner over to your tender mercy, Haug. Make him leave the islands if you can, but if he refuses turn him over to Guava's gang of heathens, who will put him in with the Merriweathers at their annual sacrifice.

"MARKS."

"This Haug is one of the queen's body-guard," said Ned. "I know him by sight. But that does not matter at present, though I shall keep that note to show Mr. Stevens. I am now sure that father, mother, and sister have been carried off to be offered as a sacrifice to the goddess Pele."

"When will this sacrifice be made, Ned?"

"I cannot tell, though I imagine it is not far away. It is something like your being blindfolded in the path of the wild bull, I am in darkness as to the time. If I only knew I should know better what to expect."

"If we only knew where it is to take place, we could get there as soon as possible."

"Oh, I can tell that well enough, or very nearly. I learned

from a native who used to work for father that the idolaters hold their religious rites under the crater of Kilauea."

"Kilauea is on Hawaii," said Lew, who, as we have seen, was pretty well posted on the geography of the island kingdom. "It is quite certain the sacrifice was not to take place until there had been time to get me there. Now can't you and I get there as quickly as those natives?"

"We ought to — we must, Lew. Your reasoning gives me courage. We are now on West Maui. The men who brought you from the palace to this island steered for the nearest point without going in sight of any settlement. I judge the natives intended to take you overland to the other end of the island, though I cannot see their object in doing this, as they could have gone much quicker and easier by water. But the end of East Maui reached, it will only take six or eight hours to cross the channel to Hawaii."

"It seems to me that we, without being burdened with a prisoner, ought to get there quicker than they could. But I thought the old religious ceremonies had been all done away with and that the Hawaiians had accepted the Christian faith."

"Let us be on the move," said Ned, "and we will talk as we go along. It is currently believed that the Hawaiians have become Christians, but a few hold strictly to their old pagan doctrines, and have, as I have reason to believe, a temple under the shadows of Mount Kilauea, though this is not generally known. In fact, I believe it is a profound secret. I have learned, too, that there is a sort of league, or union, to which many belong who do not profess to believe in the rites of Pele. These are bound by an oath they dare not break to lend such assistance as may be needed at any time. You see it is hard to break away from ancient cus-

toms. I think Marks must be knowing to, or in some manner connected with, this pagan brotherhood. It looks to me as if he was making tools of these benighted Hawaiians to carry out his plans. I picked up the paper about half-way between here and the shore. Yes, it must be fully three-fourths of the distance back. It was where the whites evidently met the natives who took you in custody. This sort of set me right, and I pushed on as fast as possible, knowing you must be needing me. I got along in the nick of time."

"Not a moment too soon, Ned. But how did you find me? It must be I have been brought a long distance."

"So you have, Lew, but I have been nearer than you dreamed all the time. You see," he continued, as his companion looked inquiringly at him, "I got out of the house at home just in season to hear your party ride away. I got my bicycle and gave pursuit. I might have overtaken you, but as that would have done no good, after seeing that you were lodged at the white palace, I sought Mr. Stevens, to find that he was away and would not return until this afternoon. It was then past eleven o'clock, but I went to the palace to see if I could learn anything of you. I got there in season to see your departure, but was seized by a uniformed flunky, who denounced me as a spy and ordered me to answer to the charge to the queen's officials. I knew my actions were suspicious and that if I got there, especially if Marks should happen to be present, my jig would be up. So I made up my mind not to go if I could help it. Doubling myself up, I planted my right foot in the pit of the stomach of that overconfident guardian of royalty with a force which shut him up like a jack-knife. While he was getting his breath enough to give the alarm, I found my bike and fol-

lowed your crowd. I had no trouble in keeping within sight until this side of Oahu was reached, when your captors got me at a disadvantage by taking every boat at the place. But farther down the coast I finally found one which I got for my bicycle, when I started after you. I had been careful to get the right direction, and I followed so near Haug's track that I saw his party on their way back. My being on hand proves that I kept the right course."

"Yes, and that makes twice you have saved my life since I have come to Hawaii, Ned."

"Affairs have been moving pretty fast, Lew, but you overrate my service to you. But let the debt be small or great, I have no doubt you will have plenty of chance to pay it before we leave Hawaii."

"I will stand by you through thick and thin, Ned. But look yonder! There are some strange men watching us. They may be the Hawaiians who were carrying me when they became frightened by the bull and ingloriously fled."

"They are the same, I think. I have been watching them. They act as though they would like to attack us, and having such superior numbers they may pluck up the courage to do it. It will be safest for us to get under the cover of the guava thickets as soon as possible."

CHAPTER XII.

THE HAWAIIAN HERMIT.

THE plain, or more correctly speaking the valley, the the boys were crossing was less than a quarter of a mile in width at that point, while above them it rapidly narrowed to a peak, which seemed to pierce the bluffs of the rugged heights frowning down upon the velvet mat at their feet. Below them the valley gradually widened, as it stretched away toward the sea, until it was stopped by a dense growth. Thus on three sides they were hemmed in by sharp mountain angles of bare peaks and dark fissures, relieved by rocky plats covered by guava and orange shrubs. Beyond these broken terraces rose Eka's group of volcanic shells.

"It won't be best for us to run," said Ned, "as that will cause them to give more haste to their pursuit. Don't look back, either, or that will arouse their suspicions. If we walk off as if unconcerned, ten to one they will do the same. At any rate it can do no harm to act with such caution as we may happen to feel."

Nothing further was said until they stopped under a thicket of ohia and kukui trees, which bore branches to the ground. Seeing no possible passage through this tangled growth, Lew said:

"Could we not have done better to have kept down the

valley? Or at least along the edge of this thicket, which seems impenetrable?"

"At the foot of the valley we should have found a growth as difficult of passage as this. Then you forget the Hawaiians, who would have been delighted with our company. If you think this scattering guava hard to get through, what will you think when you see a genuine Hawaiian thicket, as you must before we reach Kilauea?"

"Forgive me, Ned. I spoke before I thought. I won't be caught off my guard so again, I promise you. But see these apples!" and he plucked a luscious-looking white apple from a whole branch load thrust into his face.

"Yes, the ohia is the apple-tree of Hawaii growing wild almost everywhere. The fruit is not as good to eat as it looks, but it is not bad by any means. I see the natives are following us, so we must be moving as rapidly as possible."

Throwing aside the wild apple he had begun to eat, and which he found quite palatable, Lew followed in the footsteps of his companion. In this way he was better able to keep up with him, as Ned was careful to part the bushes as much as he could for him, while others he trampled under feet. But even with this assistance Lew often felt like stopping in despair. West Maui is little less than a mass of cloven rocks thrown together in a promiscuous heap, and then, as if to conceal the ugliness of its features, dense draperies of rank vines and flowering shrubs cover its rugged surface.

"Look out, Lew, for that creeper!" warned Ned, but not in season to put his companion on his guard, so Lew suddenly found himself suspended in the meshes of a vine whose matted branches held him helpless in the air.

Ned laughed softly as he came to his relief, quickly cutting

away the long, slender stems with his knife, so his friend regained his feet, quite out of breath and disgusted with a Hawaiian forest.

"Don't lose courage, Lew. If we can get through for half a mile we shall then come out where the growth is more scattering. I have another object in coming this way which I might as well tell you now. Unless he has moved within a year, there is a native living in this vicinity who at one time worked for father. He has built him a grass hut out here in the wilderness and lives a hermit life. It is near the noon hour, and we must have something to eat if we can get it as well as not. I am sure Mauve will serve us to the best his farm affords.

"It was this same Hawaiian who told me about the secret worship of the pagans of Kilauea. I saved Mauve's life once, and a true Hawaiian never forgets a favour. Finally he was taken very ill, and, as there was no one else to do it, I attended him. Everybody thought he was going to die, himself among the rest. He seemed like one haunted by a terrible nightmare, and he would rouse up in the midst of a sound sleep to utter cries of terror, and act as if he were trying to beat off a horde of demons. I spoke to him about it one day, when he confessed that a vow he had made years before was troubling him. He had accepted the teaching of the missionaries, and now he felt that he had angered the white man's God by holding to this oath of his. Finally he told me of the league to which he belonged. I consoled him as best I could, and, strange enough, from that very hour he began to get better, so that in a short time he was well again. But one afternoon he came to me with a look I shall never forget, and begged of me never to tell any one what he confessed to me. Somehow the Hawaiians had

learned that he had said something to me about it, and the punishment for betraying the secrets of the league is death. He said, with tears in his eyes, that he had not long to live. A short time after he left our plantation to come here and live a hermit life. That was as much as four years ago, and the last I knew he was still living. Father and I paid him a visit a year ago. I never told any one, not even father, of his secret, until I have mentioned it to you a few minutes ago. Please remember it was told in confidence."

The prospect of getting a dinner gave Lew courage to push forward, though that half mile through a West Maui scrub was the longest he had ever seen. His face and hands were scratched, and his clothes badly torn, when at last the growth became of larger size and more scattering. They had now begun to descend toward the lowlands. A short distance farther and they found themselves near the border of a plateau of several acres in extent. This spot seemed like a veritable Eden, every variety of fruit and vegetable known to the tropical and temperate zones seeming to abound in and around that little oasis in the wilderness. On the opposite side, standing under an orange-tree, loaded with its rich, ripe fruit hanging like golden-globes from a leafy canopy of matchless green, Lew saw what at first he mistook for a haystack, but which on second look he knew was a hut made of grass.

"Mauve's dwelling," said Ned; "but it doesn't look as if he were at home. We can do no better than look the place over. You see Mauve's garden is equal to his orchard. How are those for bananas?" pointing to huge clusters of the fruit in every stage of ripeness, as they hung from their upright staves amid flowing pennons of enormous leaves.

The grass hut of Mauve, which was typical of the native

abodes in general, was a very simple affair. Four posts set in the ground supported a thatched roof, which on the sides came nearly to the ground, thus answering for walls. The ends, except for an opening as a place of entrance, were furnished with walls of material similar to that used overhead. The rude building had but one room, which was quite sufficient for the occupant, considering the fact that he did the most of his work, even to the cooking, out of doors.

"Looks as if Mauve has been gone two or three days, though the careless way in which he has left things would seem to indicate that he had merely stepped out for a moment. The Hawaiian is always with little forethought for the future. The life that he leads, and his surroundings, all tend to make him improvident."

As Ned said, everything about the hut showed that its owner had stepped out for only a moment, yet it was evident he had been absent for a considerable time.

"There is everything growing that we shall need for our dinner," continued Ned, as they looked the premises over, "and we can do no better than to go ahead and get our dinner. I am sure Mauve would not find any fault if he should return while we were doing it. I see he has some of his favourite dish taro all prepared according to his way of liking it. But I will let that paste edible alone in that form, and cook you some of the root for dinner. It will be a rarity for you. With it we will have dates and cocoa, a typical Hawaiian dinner. What do you say to that, Lew?

"You see my tongue has broken loose. You will find me a great talker. To speak the truth, I am so elated that I have learned something of my folks that I feel in good spirits compared to what I was yesterday. Now while I cook the

dinner and talk, do you look around a little. Our stay here on Maui will be brief, so you want to improve the time."

While he was speaking, Ned began to look about for material with which to make a fire to cook the poi or taro, when for the first time Lew saw the method of cooking employed by the natives all over the islands. A hole in the ground lined with small stones is the stove or oven, and when this is heated sufficiently the food is thrust in, a little water poured on, the dish covered, and the cook has only to wait patiently for the rest.

"Taro is a difficult plant to raise," said Ned, as he started his fire, and then began to prepare the root for cooking; "that is, it requires great care in cultivation, and a year or more for it to come to maturity. Still it is the most prolific food plant in the world. Why, six feet square of it will produce food enough to last a man a whole year. As it is the principal article of subsistence for the Hawaiian, you can imagine the care and anxiety with which he tends and watches over it. As for that, Nature really affords less that grows spontaneously, and which goes toward actual living in Hawaii than you might be inclined to think at first. Of course there are fertile valleys where everything almost grows luxuriantly, but much of the soil is poor and unprofitable for cultivation. I think, too, as a rule, that man is apt to like best that which costs him the most labour in raising. The Hawaiian might live very well without his taro, or poi, but he will work and wait a twelvemonth for his favourite calabash of poi rather than to go out and pick up his dinner at will. Of the edibles growing naturally here are the yam, banana, cocoanut, sweet potato, breadfruit, arrowroot, sugar-cane, strawberry, raspberry, and the red and white apples you see so often. In addition to these the foreign inhabitants of the islands have

transplanted here about everything growing in other parts of the world, all of which flourish with remarkable growth. On the uplands of this island Irish potatoes grow well. It is strange if Mauve has not some of them. Ha, ha, what did I tell you? Here is a fine patch, and to make your dinner more like what you get at home, I will bake a couple. See another familiar crop growing yonder, his patch of wheat. Oh, Mauve is quite a farmer in a small way. But watch me cook the taro, for it is quite a knack to do it to a nicety."

While his tongue had run so glibly, Ned's hands had been busy, and not only had he got the oven well heated, but he prepared the taro for cooking. This plant belongs to the family of the calla-lily, but possesses very largely the nutritive properties of the potato. It is a beet-shaped root from six to eight inches long, and three to four in width. It has an acid or pungent taste before it is cooked, and is poisonous, but cooking removes these objections. Taro is cultivated at its best in water, the patch being embanked, and each plant growing on a hummock. Its leaves are shaped like a broad arrow, and of a very bright green.

"I have not the time to cook the taro as the natives like it best," resumed Ned, "so I shall merely boil the root, and we will eat it sliced and seasoned to the taste. Now Mauve, if he could have his favourite dish in the way that suited him best, would first bake the root in his underground oven, then laying it on a slightly concave board, beat it into a pulp with his stone pestle. This is hard work, but when it is over, the sticky substance is diluted with water until it is reduced to a paste, and then allowed to stand until it ferments. In this state it becomes the national diet, and the eating of which seems to be invested with a ceremony of deep meaning. It is like the Arab eating salt with a stranger. Now for our

dinner! See! the potatoes are crisped to a beautiful brown, and I assure you the taro is in a condition which would delight even the fastidious Mauve. I wish he might come to join us at our feast. I don't understand what his absence means."

Ned soon spread their simple food on some huge leaves under an umbrella-tree, not forgetting the dates and cocoa, while adding several bananas. He also placed some of the poi Mauve had left beside the other dishes, and then invited his companion to sit down to the "feast."

"Where do you suppose the natives that were following us have gone?" asked Lew, who had been anxiously watching the surrounding forest for some indications of them.

"Lurking in the thickets, no doubt, waiting for us to get separated in some way, when they will be ready to pounce upon the one handiest. But don't let any thought of them take away your appetite. As long as we keep together and I have this firearm in sight, we have little to fear from them. They are not like your North American Indians for warlike deeds.

"We get a fine view from this place," added Ned, as they began to partake of the dinner, which Lew found very palatable. "West Maui is aptly called the 'Switzerland of Hawaii.'"

Lewis, who was a great admirer of natural scenery, had already observed some of the transcendent beauties of a landscape that cannot be excelled by any other in the world. Around them were hundreds of miniature mountains thrusting their splintered heads boldly into the clear cerulean air, glistening turrets, bastions, and ramparts festooned with the green, crimson, and golden garments of a Hawaiian vegetation. Beyond them rose higher and grander peaks, intersected with ravines and plains and sheets of water, the azure of the tropical atmosphere lending a softening touch

to the splashes of a thousand tints, running from the deep red of the ohia blossoms to the snow-white of the convolvuli, vine and tree swaying in a breeze tempered with the frosty breath of the ice king of the frozen throne.

"This nearest mountain," said Ned, "with its cloven head and swarthy-looking sides, is Eka, wrapped in its lava cloak. How silent and grim the old fellow looks! Those splintered towers which rise so purple in the distance are the tops of the mountains of Molokai, the island of lepers. These more to our left are the barren heights of Mahoolau, the eighth of the Hawaiian group, but too small and desolate to maintain a population. We came between that and the green slopes you see on its southwest, which form the shore of Lanai Island. Last, but not least by any means, let me point out the king mountain of Hawaii, Haleakala, which name means the House of the Sun. The crater of this volcano, which has slept in peace among the clouds for unknown ages, is thirty miles in circumference, being the largest in the world. At the foot of this mountain are the largest cane-fields in existence. At its base on this side lies the wonderful and famous valley or ravine of Iao. This place is noted for the great number of its ferns, its rich tropical verdure, its gorges and precipices, and its legends and myths, which entitle it to be called the birthplace of Hawaiian mythology. It was here the religious rites and sacrifices were originally performed.

"In that valley were fought the terrific battles between Kamehameha I. and the King of Maui, the most bloody in all of the great conquest, and which resulted in the complete destruction of the native defenders. So many were slain that their bodies, it is claimed, dammed the stream flowing through the valley so its waters ran back the other way.

This was an important victory for Kamehameha, as Maui is only second in size of the Hawaiian group, and was at that time first in importance. The principal city of the islands at that time was Lahaina, which was mistress of these seas. To show you the position Maui held in the estimation of the people, I will tell you one of the legends connected with it and the heathen inhabitants.

"Many years ago this island was ruled by a powerful demigod named Maui, and from whom you will see it got its name. The island then really consisted of two, the more important of which was that on which stood the great volcano, the abode of the goddess of volcanoes, Queen Pele. But there was another mountain to the east and south upon which the sun shone first every morning. This made Maui very angry, and he vowed that it should not be so. Accordingly he ordered a big net to be made, and, having his men carry it one night to the rival peak, he caused this mighty net to be spread from point to point so it covered the great crater. The next morning, as the rising sun sent out its rays as usual, it suddenly found itself entangled in Maui's big net. Maui watched it all with a merry twinkle in his eye. The sun strove in vain to break away, and in vain did he shoot his fiery shafts through the great gauze-like web. The meshes had been woven too cunningly for the sun to escape, and at last he was glad to pray for deliverance. This was what Maui had been waiting for, but before he would cut away his net he made the sun promise to shine on him and Kilauea alike, never too hot or too cold, never allowing mist or cloud to obscure the favoured islands. The sun agreed to this, and ever since has bestowed his gifts on the seven islands with wonderful equality, always with the remarkable evenness of temperature that is the wonder of Hawaii.

Neither have fogs or mists risen to shroud its genial rays. But the sun, lest he should forget his promise and shine too fiercely on his children of the sea, made a compact with the north wind to keep eternal vigil over him.

"Maui was so pleased with his success that he grew proud and overbearing, until he quarrelled with the Goddess Pele, and she took up abode with Kilauea, where she still abides in the House of Fire. No sooner had she done this than Haleakala lost his fiery glory. Maui was so angry at this that he stamped his foot with such terrific force that huge volumes of lava and volcanic débris were sent down into the sea at the base of the mountain, making the low peninsula uniting East and West Maui, and uniting them in one island. The angry demigod was buried under the mass and that was the last of him. In proof of this assertion, the native who tells the story will point out a couple of foothills at his feet, they being so large as not to be covered."

By this time they had finished their dinner, and, anxious to get to Lahaina, the town which Ned wished to reach, they prepared at once to resume their journey.

"Mauve will wonder who has been here when he gets back," declared Ned, "but we shall be many miles from here unless he returns very soon. Look yonder if you want to see some of your friends," he added, pointing to the upper end of the orchard, where Lew saw a dozen dark visages peering out from the thicket upon them.

"Keep close beside me. We have delayed here longer than was good policy. They mean to give us trouble."

With these words Ned led the way down through the orange grove, and he was about to step out into a path winding toward the sea, when he stopped abruptly with a low cry of horror.

CHAPTER XIII.

WHAT NED SAW UNDER THE ORANGE-TREE.

"WHAT is it, Ned?" asked Lew, who was at a loss to understand the reason of his companion's sudden stop.

"Look!" replied Ned, simply, stepping aside so his friend could see what had met his gaze.

Lew uttered a cry of horror at the sight which he beheld, and he started back. Then both looked first at the ghastly spectacle in their pathway and then upon each other without speaking. At their feet lay the body of a dead man! The upturned face left no doubt of the decease of the silent figure, looking up at them with glassy eyes. It was not a white man, but a Hawaiian.

"Mauve!" whispered Ned, the first to speak after the shock of finding the body had passed.

"So near his home when he died," said Lew. "He must have been taken ill suddenly."

"He was strangled!" declared Ned, who had taken a closer observation of the surroundings. "See the vine lying there by his side with which it was done. One end is still around his neck!"

"And the other thrown over the tree above him. He must have hung himself."

"No — no! Had that been the case it would have

been shorter. He lies too far outside of the tree for that. Here are signs of a struggle. Poor Mauve was dealt with foully. I could not have eaten my dinner with so good a relish had I known he was lying so near and dead. Poor Mauve! it came at last, after all."

"Do you think he was killed by those who had threatened him for telling their secret?" asked Lew, who at once recalled the story told by his companion at their noonday meal.

"Of course I am not sure of it, but it looks so. I am very sure it is so. It is too bad, for Mauve was a kind-hearted man, like the majority of the Hawaiians, having no malice against any one, open-hearted and generous to a fault. Outside of that fanatical league I do not believe he had an enemy in the world. He certainly did not seek one. We can do nothing with his body, but I will speak to some of the natives at Lahaina about giving it proper sepulture."

With feelings closely akin to grief the boys turned away from the silent figure of the ill-fated Hawaiian to continue their journey, neither speaking until Ned, who was again in advance, caught him by the arm, saying, in a low tone:

"We are surrounded by a party of natives!"

Ned's thrilling announcement did not startle Lew as much as the discovery of Mauve's dead body in the thicket above had done. He had not seen or heard anything of their enemies, though he had not been as much on the alert as his friend had been.

"How many do you think there are?" asked Lew, in a whisper.

"A dozen or more. They improved the opportunity while we stopped by Mauve's dead body to get in ahead of us. I just saw one skulking through the thicket on our left, I

have seen one on the right, and there are doubtless others behind us. But they are all carefully under cover."

"What had we better do?" inquired Lew, who naturally looked to Ned as a leader.

"If you had a gun I know just what we would do, — make a bold dash right through them. I think that is the best plan for us, anyway. It is a quick, daring movement which counts. The sooner it is done the better for us. Are you willing to risk it?"

"I will risk my life where you will yours. I ought to have got a weapon before this."

"Ready then for a swift dash for life. Keep close beside me — now — come on!"

Swinging his light rifle in front of him, Ned bounded forward at the top of his speed, turning neither to the right nor left. At his heels followed Lew, carrying a heavy club he had been fortunate enough to pick up at their start. The concealed natives must have been surprised at the unexpected attack, for shrill cries rang from the thickets near at hand, while half a dozen swarthy men leaped forward to stop the approaching twain.

Ned did not think it advisable to shoot one of the Hawaiians at this stage of affairs if he could avoid it. But pointing his firearm over the head of the nearest of the natives, he fired into the air. The fellow evidently thought he was hit, for with a howl of terror he made a bolt for the forest, his cries ringing sharply on the scene as he disappeared.

As the same time Ned was frightening off his man with his overhead shot Lew found himself confronted by another native, who seemed determined to end his career then and there. The club now came in handy, and, swinging it over his head, Lew felled the Hawaiian in his tracks.

"Come on, Lew," cried Ned, again dashing forward. The loss of their leaders so disconcerted the rest of the party of natives that before they had recovered sufficiently to give pursuit the boys had vanished in the growth below.

Finding that they were not closely pursued, after running awhile the boys slackened their pace.

"I do not believe we shall have anything more to fear from them," said Ned. "At any rate, they are now all behind us, which is something worth knowing."

"And I will warrant you one of them has a sore head," declared Lew.

"I might have killed my man," said Ned, "but it did not seem best under the circumstances. At any rate I do not wish to take life as long as it can be avoided."

"There is one thing sure," said Lew, "if there is a fire-arm in Lahaina I am going to have it if it is possible."

"It might be well for you to get one. But let me advise you, Lew, not to get a gun. A revolver is so much easier carried, and I think it would answer every purpose."

"From this Lahaina you are thinking of going to Hawaii?"

"Yes. I expect we can take a steamer at Lahaina and make the passage before to-morrow at this time, if we go to Hilo as I now intend to do. Hawaii, which you must know is the largest of the windward islands, lies about twenty-eight miles from the shore of East Maui; that is, the channel between them is that width. Hilo, however, is so far down the coast that we have got a good long sea ride before us. The shortest cut is to the leeward, or Lahaina side of Maui, but traffic may call the steamer the other way, when our journey will be considerable longer. We shall find out about all this when we reach Lahaina, which will be before sunset."

In this Ned was right, for the setting sun was touching with its inimitable gold the brown peaks of Kilhooaui as Lew became aware that they were approaching one of those strangely situated but beautiful cities of Hawaii, embowered in the heart of a grove of oranges, mangoes, tamarinds, algarobas, and cocoa-palms.

"Here we are at Lahaina," said Ned. "This was once a prosperous town and the scene of warlike aspect, when royalty had it for its capital and armed warriors thronged its single street. Honolulu robbed it of its royalty and its commerce at the same time, and it has gone to seed."

Lew saw, as Ned had hinted, that the dwellings were nearly all on one street, which ran parallel with the sea. Very few signs of life were to be seen, except where a sugar refinery made considerable bustle and activity at the farther end of the city.

"Of one thing Lahaina can boast," said Ned, as they walked along the quiet street, "and that is its cats and dogs. Old Bubastis itself could not have furnished a more numerous representation of the feline race. See them running in every direction. Lahaina is the cat's paradise."

"There is a good reason for the people all settling on one street," declared Lew, as he looked up to the burnt, barren slopes of Eka crowding down toward the shore. "There isn't room for more than one street."

"Oh, well, if Lahaina lacks for room on the land, she found plenty of it at sea. In the halcyon days of the old kingdom the bay literally swarmed with whale-ships and canoes of the natives. It is claimed that more than a hundred whaling ships have anchored here in a single season, unloading their cargoes and getting supplies. But Kamehameha saw that there was a better harbour beyond Diamond

Head, and he founded Honolulu and changed it all. But if no longer the home of kings and having the business of whale-ships, Lahaina is again becoming a prosperous city through the more modern industry of sugar-making. Big fields of cane are just beyond the city, and the mills are kept busy. I see no sign of a steamer," added Ned, anxiously. "I am afraid we have come at a wrong time."

They were not long in learning the truth of this statement. A steamer had left there the day before, and another was not expected within three days. Knowing the importance of improving every moment, Lew was as disappointed as Ned, to whom he looked to see what effect this situation would have.

CHAPTER XIV.

ACROSS MAUI BY NIGHT.

"DID the steamer of yesterday keep on the leeward?" Ned asked of the official.

"It did, sir."

"Then there must be another going to the windward about this time?"

"Yes," beginning to consult a time-table. "According to this, one is due at Wailuku to-morrow at noon."

"Then we must get there before that time," and as the surprised officer looked sharply at him, Ned turned away, saying to Lew:

"What do you say to that, old fellow?"

"I am with you, Ned," he replied, promptly, though he did not dream of the journey necessary to be performed to carry out his good intentions.

"You do not ask where this Wailuku is, Lew."

"Because I have faith enough in you to believe you will not undertake the impossible. Of one thing I feel sure, — I can go as far as you can."

"Good for you. Wailuku is on the other side of Maui."

"How far away?"

"The island is thirty miles in width by forty-eight in length. In order to get around the mountains we shall have to go as far as its length would be, as the bird flies."

"Shall we have to walk it?" asked Lew, who was beginning to realise the extent of the task in hand.

"If we can't get ponies. I think we can hire a couple for a small sum. At any rate, that is our first thing to look after. In Hawaii most every one has his pony, and, though many of them look little better than scrubs, they are capable of doing all you can reasonably ask of them."

Ned and Lew spent the next hour in trying to find the much needed ponies, and they were successful in hiring two for the trip at what seemed to Lew a ridiculously low sum. The owner promised to have the animals ready for a start at ten o'clock, and they were to be left at Wailuku in charge of a friend of his until he could get them home by some one coming from that town.

Knowing their need of sleep, Ned had purposely delayed their time of starting so they could get a few hours' rest. The nearest approach to a public house in Lahaina was what had been, in the days of royal occupancy of the city, the queen's palace. This structure, which looked to Lew as they approached it like a huge hay-rick well loaded down, was about forty feet square, standing on round posts eight feet high and planted in the ground about a yard apart. Timbers were laid along the tops of these uprights, from which rafters formed a steep roof thatched with plaited grass, cane, and banana leaves. Each post and filling of smaller sticks was lashed to its position with twisted cocoanut fibres and tough grasses. In the days of royal ownership it had had no floor, though doubtless many mats and ornaments took its place. The one great room or hall had been partitioned off into three rooms, and these, supplied with modern furniture, were floored with sawed lumber, which Ned said had come from the States.

They did not feel like making very extended examinations of their surroundings, as tired as they were, and knowing the short time in which they would have to rest.

"Be careful that you get the net well over your couch," advised Ned, as he and Lew sank upon the strange mat beds assigned them. "You are likely to learn what mosquitoes are on the Hawaiian Islands. They are one of the few pests which afflict Hawaii, and these were imported to this city in casks of water brought on the ship *Wellington*, coming from Mexico in 1826."

Lew followed Ned's advice, and he had good reasons to know that he had, when a few minutes later, just as he was dropping into a refreshing sleep, what at first seemed like the murmuring of a brook was heard, rapidly growing louder and increasing in volume, until the sound, becoming hideous upon closer proximity, filled his ears. Through the open windows swarmed such an army of winged insects as to make the apartment alive with the buzzing, whizzing, busy intruders. Ned and Lew were immediately assailed by a force which threatened to carry them off bodily. The nets soon proved insufficient to protect them. Many of the mosquitoes were quickly underneath the fine bars, and with mosquitoes outside, mosquitoes in the air, mosquitoes at their heads, mosquitoes pecking at every available bit of flesh, mosquitoes dinning their songs of triumph into their ears, mosquitoes of the most ravenous nature all about them, the boys began a furious battle for existence. As Ned had foretold, Lew had never seen mosquitoes like those, either in size, numbers, or voracity. He fought them until he was exhausted, when he sank back upon his couch, and with their ceaseless uproar ringing in his ears, and their long bills at work, he fell into a fitful sleep.

Ned had paid a boy to call them promptly at ten, and it seemed to Lew he had not fairly got to sleep before the mellow voice of the young Hawaiian aroused him to activity. His companion was already astir. He noticed that the mosquitoes had either taken flight or sought retreats where they could sleep off the effects of their recent debauch upon human blood.

"If mosquitoes are so numerous and troublesome as they seem, why don't the people have screens to their windows?" asked Lew, who remembered the good effect such precautions had against the intrusion of flies at home.

"Oh, they are afraid they will keep out some of the fresh air," replied Ned, with a smile.

"But I do not understand that it is as warm here at any time as it is in New England in July, August, and September."

"Oh, no, but facts do not always overcome people's prejudices. But it is not alone in the houses that mosquitoes are troublesome, for at sunset, with a south wind blowing, they will fairly fill the air, and your mouth, too, if you have it open much. Sometimes a Chinese drug called *buhac* is burned. That numbs them; they fall helpless for the time. But you won't mind them as much after you have been here awhile. The vital question now is, do you feel equal to a fifty-mile ride over the lava beds and lantana thickets of West Maui?"

"Try me, and see," was Lew's cheery reply.

"Good. We have fifteen minutes to get ready for our lunch, and as many more in which to eat it, so as to get started at half-past. I do not care for myself, but I am afraid you will find this journey more than you bargained

for. If you prefer, you can remain here at Lahaina, and take the first steamer —"

"Stop, Ned Merriweather! I know what you are driving at, and if you ever hint of my backing out again I will —"

"Forget it, generous Lew," broke in Ned. "Forgive me, and I will never be guilty of the offence again. But you will not wonder I spoke as I did when you have tried to cross Maui on horseback."

Lew making no reply to this, they completed their toilet in silence, and a few minutes later they were eating a light meal of poi, cocoanut, and banana. At half-past ten promptly they had mounted the small, wiry ponies, and were heading out of the sleepy town at a smart canter.

Ned had learned that there were three routes overland from Lahaina to Wailuku. One of these led through Wailuku Pass and the Iao Valley, a second found an easier but longer course by the way of the isthmus, while the third was a bridle-path winding over the foothills and amid the valleys at the foot of Mount Eka. He had chosen the latter and shorter route, believing that the difference in distance would more than make up for any discomforts of the ride. On the northern slope, too, this path broadened into a respectable road.

"The night promises clear, and in the course of an hour the moon will be high enough to light our way with a brightness almost equal to daylight," declared Ned, as they started.

Before striking this mountain path they rode for a couple of miles along a hard, sandy beach at a swinging pace. Soon overcoming their feelings of drowsiness, they began to enjoy their ride. Then they reached the starting-point of the narrow path climbing the hills, and they were obliged to exchange the smooth, level course for the broken ascent, and

their ponies were fain to slacken their gait to a tedious walk. The way led up, up, up, until the boys grew weary of the constant scrambling upward. As they were obliged to ride in single file, there was no opportunity for conversation, except when Ned, who was ahead, stopped to make some comment while the ponies got breath, and pointed out some of the beauties of the magnificent landscape, which looked more than commonly fascinating in the bewitching light of the stars and the purple beams of the southern moon. Nothing can surpass the soft brilliancy of a Hawaiian moonlight, as no other mountains and valleys, plains and plateaus, caverns and precipices, forests and seashore, can outrival the form and colouring, glory and grandeur, of those of West Maui.

"This island is styled the Switzerland of Hawaii," said Ned, as they gazed admiringly on the wide panorama. "I heard one gentleman, who had travelled for many years, say that more truthfully Switzerland was the West Maui of Europe.

"I like Oahu best of all the islands," continued Ned, "but that may be because my home is there. I must confess that Maui outdoes it in matters of natural wonders. What I admire most about West Maui is its variety of scenery. One never tires of its landscapes. Look where you will, mountains and valleys of every conceivable shape meet the gaze, and plains and forests. If you see but little indications of a population, it is on account of the foliage concealing them. All among the valleys on our right and on the plains are the sugar mills and houses of the planters and the men who work for them. If the natives were indolent and careless of the morrow, the foreigners have aroused them to the spirit of the times to a considerable

extent. All that Hawaii is to-day in the ways of progress she owes to American and English enterprise, more particularly the first. It was American missionaries who gave them religious liberty; it was American statesmen who gave them the right to own their homes, and American wisdom which has guided them in their grand march of business successes."

They were now at the height of their course. On their left the dusky crest of Eka frowned down upon them, while on the other hand and farther away rose far above them that isolated Colossus Haleakala, the moon giving its serried top a peculiar hue.

"The old giant quite undid himself, and gave up the ghost at one upheaval," said Ned, seeing that his companion was looking at the "House of the Sun." "It seems that during one of its periodical overthrows it drained itself completely empty, its molten contents finding escape on the east and north sides. Something of the size of these streams may be understood when you see that these gaps are each seven miles wide. It has a crater two thousand feet deep, and, as I have told you, thirty miles in orbit. But we must be moving. As it is now all down grade we shall get along faster."

The ponies, trained to such service, moved with cautious steps along the descending course. As they advanced, tall crags, domes, and towering pinnacles of lava rock shut out the moonlight for long stretches. They had now fairly plunged into the mountain wilderness of West Maui. The path, — it could not honestly be called a road, — was lined with guava-bushes and tall grass interwoven with ferns and the irrepressible lantana, which abounded almost everywhere. If there is one pest in Hawaii it is this selfsame lantana, in

other countries a plant of more or less favour but here a curse.

"Lantana, yes," said Ned, at one of their stops, "you will find it wherever you look. It grows in the fertile valleys, on the rocky mountains, on the sides of the bottomless ravine, on the border of the hot lava beds of the volcanoes, clinging with a tenacity that is remarkable anywhere, everywhere! You may dig it up, and it will root anew and grow with renewed vitality. You may even burn it, and it will throw out new shoots from its ashes, and lo! lantana again confronts you. I do not vouch for the truth of this statement, but at any rate it has the credit of doing it, and that is sufficient. There is a legend that one of the demi-gods of old got into trouble with the god of another island somewhere, and he went with a mighty army to overpower the enemy. He was successful in driving his foe to one corner of the realm, where the other placed himself and defenders behind a network of lantana-vines. Seeing his enemy so slightly protected, the demi-god rushed with his army pell-mell upon the other. But so badly did he and his men get entangled and torn to pieces by the lantana-vines, that they were glad to give up and beat a retreat from the island. In getting away it seemed that a lantana seed or cutling got under one of the demi-god's toe-nails. After he had got home, as it began to make his toe sore, he dug the offending object out and threw it away. It lay for a long time on a lava block, but gathering moisture, in time it grew into a strong plant, which so pleased the demi-god that he let it thrive. If he didn't live to rue the day, those who have come after him have. But here is a little beauty which margins many of our streams, called the moon-flower, as it opens only after twilight."

Half an hour later Ned abruptly halted, saying:

"Here we are at a fork of the path, and for the life of me I do not know which one to follow. A mistake here may take us many miles out of our way, and cause us to miss the steamer."

Lew knew the truth of this, but he could offer no advice which could be relied upon. The moonlight enabled them to see that the paths had been used about equally. The one on their right wound into what appeared to be a dark ravine, with towering cliffs overhanging it as far as they could see. The other climbed a more uneven passage over the foothills of Eka. This mountain could be seen above the tree-tops and surrounding bluffs, but no more of the outside world could they see. Ned, with an anxious look on his countenance, dismounted, and examined closely the ground along both pathways.

CHAPTER XV.

AN ALARM AND STARTLING DISCOVERY.

"THE last party to pass over the left-hand path was going the same way we are. They must have come from Lahaina or Malaeka, and the most likely destination for them would be Wailuku. The tracks from the other path lead up from the valley, and they were evidently going to the *maika* side of the island. We will take the left."

Supposing that Lew understood the meaning of the expression "*maika* side," Ned offered no explanation. In fact, such a thing would not have naturally occurred to him as being necessary. It is somewhat curious that neither foreign inhabitants nor natives often express a knowledge of the points of compass except by such idioms as apply themselves to the local situation. By *maika* Ned meant toward the sea. If he had wanted to designate a mountainward course he would have said *mauka*. If he had wanted to have been explicit as to the course he had chosen to follow, he would have said: "We will take the *mauka* path to the Wailuku side of the island." That would have really meant the mountain path to the north side of the island. But he was not given any time for explanation, if he had intended to do it, for as he approached his pony, Lew exclaimed:

"Hark, Ned! I believe I hear the hoofstrokes of a horse coming up the right-hand trail."

"I hear them, too, Lew, now you have called my attention to them. We will wait and see who rides in this forsaken country at this lonely hour. He may be able to give us just the information we need."

The sounds increased rapidly, until a furious clatter of feet was heard, telling that the rider was coming at a tremendous pace. They were both armed now with revolvers, Ned having exchanged at Lahaina his rifle for weapons more convenient to carry. Both looked to these firearms now for protection, as the headlong approach of the stranger might indicate something wrong. But their suspense was not of long duration, for the rider quickly appeared on the scene, bareheaded, his long arms swinging in the air, while he goaded on the little animal he bestrode with frantic blows. His whole appearance was more ridiculous than terrifying, while he halted with a suddenness which nearly unseated him, as Ned called out:

"Hold on, sir! We have a favour to ask."

In his excitement he had not noticed them until that moment. His reply betrayed his nationality:

"Begorra! an' who's be yez a-blockin' a gintleman's pathway?"

"Friends," answered Ned, acting as spokesman. "There must be something of extraordinary importance to cause you to ride like that."

"Howly St. Patrick! it's not Owld Important at all, at all; it's th' divil!"

The Irishman, who was a well-seeming young man, was so wrought up over something he had witnessed that it was some time before the boys could learn that he had heard a strange noise in one of the ravines below.

"Some night-bird," said Ned. "Calm —"

"Night-bird was it a scr'amin' loike thot? Barrin' ye good feelin's, it was no night-bird at all, at all. It was th' divil's v'ice, an' ez thrue ez I'm mesilf, whut is th' same ez Michael O'Doyle, I heard th' Owld Boy's heels clatter ag'in th' pali!"

"It may have been a man," said Lew. "Don't you think it was a man in distress?"

"Little does I know whut kind av a dress he wore, or if he wore no dress at all, at all. It wuz th' divil's v'ice, an' ef ye don't belave me, why stay here while ye come back an' see fer yersilves."

The boys concluded to accompany Mr. O'Doyle a short distance, to learn, if possible, the cause of his alarm.

"Lead the way, Mike," said Ned, "and we will go with you to see what has given you such a breaking up. No doubt it was an innocent tree branch scraping against another. But lead on, Mike."

"It's forninst ye go yersilf, an' glad ye'll be to shtop at th' big rock, or Michael O'Doyle is a fool!"

Heading their ponies down the path from whence the Irishman had come, Ned and Lew advanced at a smart canter, while he followed with muttered exclamations, which they did not hear or think worthy of the pains to find out. At the end of a quarter of a mile they came to a big boulder, when they stopped to allow him to overtake them.

"Was it here, Mike, you heard the noise?"

"It was jis' here I heerd th' tirrible craythur. An', hist! Theer it be ag'in!"

A low, plaintive wail or moan came very faintly to them. Ned and Lew looked upon each other with wonder, while the Irishman clutched at the short mane of his pony, while he gazed on his young companions with amazement.

"It was a human voice," whispered Ned, for there was something so weird and uncanny in this nocturnal cry that even he was strangely affected, though not with fear.

"Whoever he is, he is in distress," said Lew. "Let's find out the trouble."

"Agreed. We must leave our ponies here under Mike's care. Come on," and they at once plunged into the dense growth in the direction of the cry. No one who has never tried to penetrate a Hawaiian thicket is prepared to understand any description which may be given of it. Urged on with more than common incentive, the boys fairly tore their way through the vines and ferns; yes, and lantanas! After going several rods, and at a loss to know which way to proceed, they stopped beside a guava-bush and listened, until again there broke on the stillness of the scene the pitiful moan of agony.

"It sounds farther off," said Ned, "though that may be because it is fainter."

"How would it do to give an answer?"

"I have thought of that; but it may be a decoy to get us into trouble. On the whole, I think it will be safer to move cautiously."

Acting under this sage counsel, they again pushed their way forward, until Ned abruptly stopped, with a low warning to his companion. At the same moment Lew felt his footing giving away, as it seemed, and he sank several feet down into a mass of vines and roots. Ned felt a thrill of horror, as he saw his companion disappear at his very feet. A second look, however, showed him Lew's foot held fast in a lantana-vine, and he quickly pulled him from the hidden depths, very much excited, but safe.

"That was a narrow escape," commented Ned. "No

doubt that gorge is a hundred feet deep, but so nicely is it covered with this undergrowth that I did not see it until I was about to step into it as you did. West Maui is famous for these hidden palis. The lantana saved you, so that much is scored in its favour. There is the cry again, — plainer this time."

Changing their course so as to follow along the brink of the pali which had come so near costing Lew his life, they advanced for a little way, when Ned halted.

"I can't make out where that cry comes from. It seems to be off to our left, but it cannot be. There it is once more. Lew, *it is below us!*"

As incredible as it seemed, such appeared to be the case. Pushing his way through the dense foliage a few yards farther up the brink of the pali to a spot more favourable for inspection, Ned parted the fringe of bushes, and peered into the abyss hanging at his feet. Fortunately, the gorge, for it was nothing less, ran east and west, so the moon shone here fairly into its wall-like opening, making it lighter for a considerable depth than it was under the tangled growth. At first he could see only the high walls of the chasm, but another groan, coming from so near at hand that he gave a start of alarm, fell on his ears, and directed his gaze to a sight he will never forget.

A rod or more above him, and carried out over the frightful abyss by the support holding it there, hung in the empty space the figure of a man.

Lew was leaning forward over his head and gazing on the same spectacle. A closer inspection brought a feeling of relief, as they saw that the unfortunate person was suspended from a rope fastened around his body under his arms, so there was no danger of strangulation, as the first view had

suggested. Then why should he writhe so, and utter such pitiful cries? Another look explained the whole horrible situation, and the fearful doom awaiting the poor victim. The ten feet of twisted vine which held him dangling over the chasm was secured at the upper end to the top of a tall, slender mango-tree, which had been cut nearly half-way through a few feet above its roots. Beneath the strain of his weight, as he swayed to and fro in the air, the uncut portion of the wood was breaking away fibre by fibre, and bending outward and downward over the yawning space. So far had this work gone on that speedily the last grain of wood must part, and the doomed man be hurled upon the rocky bed of the ravine to a death too horrible to contemplate. His hands and feet were tied, so he was powerless to avert the fate which he understood only too well.

The startling sight held the attention of the boys for a moment, as if under the spell of a terrible fascination. Lew was the first to speak or move.

"We must act at once, Ned, if we would save him."

"Yes — yes, Lew! but look! Oh! can it be? It is — *it is father!*"

CHAPTER XVI.

MR. MERRIWEATHER'S STORY.

NED'S startling words caused Lew to stop suddenly in his difficult passage through the bushes, and, turning toward his companion, he asked:

"Are you sure of it, Ned?"

"Yes — yes! it is father! What if we are too late to save him?"

A sharp cracking sound coming from the yielding mango warned them that time was precious. Under the strain it could not meet, the mutilated tree was bowing lower and lower, carrying down, down into the abyss the form of the wretched man, who swung and writhed in mid-air like a fly dangling from the thread of a spider that had caught it in its toils. Realising that every moment was of vital importance, the boys fairly rushed to the small clearing on the bank of the chasm above him, regardless of the rents given their clothes, or the scratches on their faces and hands.

Once on the scene, the problem arose as to how they could rescue Mr. Merriweather from his perilous position. He hung about four feet out from the wall of the pali, and he had sunk so his head was below its brink.

"If we only had a rope," said Lew. "If we had the bridle-reins of the ponies."

"We haven't time to get them. Hurrah! we're in luck!" cried Ned, picking up a piece of vine, left, no doubt, from

"'HE RECOGNISES ME. WE MUST WORK FAST.'"

that used in suspending Mr. Merriweather, and beginning to fashion a knot in one end. "If you will hold upon me, Lew, I think I can get it around father's body by reaching out over the pali."

Going to the edge then, Ned spoke to his father, to receive a faint, but joyous, response.

"He recognises me. We must work fast."

It required but a short time to accomplish Ned's hazardous feat, when, at Lew's suggestion, they fastened the free end to the foot of a tree, so in case the sapling should suddenly break away, Mr. Merriweather might be saved from falling very far.

"Now if we only had Mike here," said Ned, "I think all together we might pull father near enough to the rock to get a square hold upon him. I wonder if the frightened fellow will come here if I explain the situation to him. I will try."

Another quick, short snap from the breaking tree at that moment caused them to hold more firmly upon the line they had improvised, and they held on with such firmness as to relieve the strain on the mango, while Ned shouted to the Irishman to come to their assistance. Mike heard him and replied, and, when he had been assured of the true situation, he came as rapidly as his lumbering steps would allow.

"Begorra—" he began, but Ned checked him at the outset of his speech by saying:

"Catch hold here, Mike! Your strong arm is just what we need."

In this Ned proved correct, and, with some smart pulling and a careful manipulating of the line, the three managed to draw Mr. Merriweather to the brink of the pali, and then up, until they laid him on the ground, safe at last!

It had been a trying ordeal to them, but so much more of a strain on him that he lay on the hard earth motionless.

"He has fainted," said Lew.

"It is more than a faint," replied Ned. "Poor father! I wonder how it is you came here, and where mother and Grace are. Perhaps they are close by. I wish you could speak and tell us, father."

But the colourless lips were sealed for the time, if not for eternity, and the three stood silent and thoughtful. Lew was the first to speak.

"It won't do for us to remain here like this. If there was only some place near by where we could take your father, Ned, something might be done for him. As soon as he revives we could begin to search for the others."

"Shure, an' if it's a place yez want to lay th' poor man's hid, there's me own shanty a bit below here. It's not sich an illigant house ez many yez see, but sich ez it is its dures are open to yez, an' Mollie — Mollie's the wife av me busum — will be open to resave yez, too."

This homely invitation of Mike's was evidently spoken from the heart, and it occurred to the boys that the best they could do was to accept it.

"How far is it, Mike?"

"An' which way does yez mane?"

"Why, going to it, of course."

"Then it's a good five mile. Comin' this way it would be tin, it's thot hilly."

"I wonder how we can get poor father there. We shall have to carry him in some way."

"Why can't we take a couple of these slender trees and, by lashing on cross-pieces, with a matting of leaves, make

a sort of litter on which to carry him, as wounded soldiers are carried from the battle-fields?"

"I suppose we must cut the trees down with our knives, and that will be the hardest part of it," replied Ned, hopefully.

Mike assured them he had left the ponies so they would not stray, and the three went to work constructing the rude litter, upon which, when completed, they placed the still unconscious man. Before this, Lew had discovered a pathway through the growth which seemed to lead in the direction of the road, and along this course they slowly advanced, Ned carrying the forward end and Lew the rear end of the poles, while Mike went ahead to get the ponies ready for a start.

This by-path came out upon the road a few rods above the boulder where they had left the animals. Taking turns in the carrying, the little party pushed on as rapidly as possible under the circumstances.

Mr. Merriweather remained unconscious about half of the way, when he began to move uneasily, and from that time on one had to walk beside the stretcher to keep him from throwing himself off. Though he talked considerably, his speech was but idle ramblings from which the boys could gather no inkling of what had befallen him or the others.

The extra care they had to bestow upon him made it necessary for them to fasten the reins of the ponies to the one carrying the rear end of the poles, the animals following without trouble. Thus the home of Mike was reached in safety, though the sun was sending its rays over the distant mountains before that time. No other house was in sight, and, hidden by an oleander and plantain grove, it seemed

completely isolated from the world. But Mike assured them it was only four miles to the nearest dwelling on the *maika* side.

Mrs. O'Doyle met them with anxious looks, and she at once assisted in the care of the sufferer. Mr. Merriweather was placed upon a couch and made as comfortable as possible, while the little group gave their undivided attention to him. Of course the boys gave up all intentions of leaving Maui until something had been learned more definitely from Ned's father. If he was on the island why might not the rest be near by, too? Ned in thinking of this grew uneasy, and, finding there was nothing more he could do for his father, he began to pace back and forth just outside of the house, while he tried to decide the best course for him to pursue.

"Come here, Ned!" called out Lew in a few minutes. "Your father is talking more intelligently. I believe he is coming to his senses."

Ned was quickly back to his parent's side, when he saw that a great change for the better had taken place within a few minutes.

"You are better, father," he said. "Don't you recognise me?"

"Is it you, Ned? How long have you been here? I wish you would ask your mother to come here. My head feels so queer, and there is a sharp pain in my back. I must have fallen asleep, for I have had the strangest dream I ever had, and it seems so real. I thought I had been carried off by a party of kidnappers and left hanging over a high pali, so deep that I could not see its bottom. Oh! I shudder now as I think of it."

"It was no dream, father! It was all real. Don't let it

alarm you; you are not at home, but a long way from it. Can't you tell just what has happened to you?"

"No, Ned, though I begin to see clearer. The mist lifts from my mind. I recall now that I was sitting in my favourite resting-place under the algaroba-tree below the house, when something was flung over my head, and I was dragged backward upon the ground. Before I could defend myself or cry out I was bound and gagged, and then stout men bore me swiftly away. Though the bandage was not removed from my eyes, I knew I was being taken off the island of Oahu. Then, after a long passage by water, land was reached, and I was made to walk until I often fell, for it was terrible being dragged through the vines and brambles blindfolded. I was kept in a cavern for what seemed to me two or three days, and then borne, still blindfolded, to the pali and left in the situation in which you found me. What it has been for is more than I can imagine."

"Then mother and Grace were not taken captives with you?"

"Have they been torn from home?" he cried, excitedly. "I have seen or heard nothing of them."

CHAPTER XVII.

NED MEETS WITH A LOSS.

"CALM yourself, father. Yes, I must acknowledge that they have disappeared as suddenly and mysteriously as you did, and at the same time, as far as I know. I have done everything I could to find you all, and Lew here — Lewis Hiland, whom you know I had invited to come to Hawaii — and I were on our way to Hilo when we discovered you hanging over the pali."

Mr. Merriweather clasped Lew's hand in a gentle pressure and murmured a few words of fulsome greeting, but it was plain his mind was with those who had been thus rudely torn away.

"Lew has been with me ever since that day, and I do not know what I could do without him. Now, father, I don't want to excite you, but I must ask you again if you have any idea of what has been done with mother and Grace?"

"Let me think, my son. My head seems so heavy, and my mind so slow to act. Let me try and think of what I have heard. I have seen nothing of them, neither have I dreamed that harm had overtaken them. But let me consider longer. I do recall now something that was said by my captors while I was in the cavern, which I can see had a meaning I did not dream of then. O God! can it be true?" and he buried his face in his hands and wept like a child.

Ned spoke to his father soothingly and waited patiently

until his outburst of grief had passed, when he said, gently: "Do not be too much alarmed, father. Lew and I have found you, and we will find them. Tell us exactly what you overheard in the cavern."

"The men who had brought me there were Hawaiians every one of them, and they were talking in an undertone, when one of them said loud enough for me to catch the words, 'Pele will rejoice over them. The girl will be a beautiful offering.' I can see it all now. They were taking, or had taken, Mary and Grace to Kilauea!"

These words were but the echo of the thoughts of Ned and Lew. Advising his father to rest awhile, as he was getting very tired by his exertions, Ned called Lew aside for consultation.

"We would go right on to Hawaii," he said, "if it was not for father. I don't want to leave him, and yet it seems imperative to do so."

"Mike appears honest," replied Lew, "and his wife is a good nurse, judging from appearances. Won't he be safe with them? No one would be likely to find him here. I mean his enemies."

It seemed the most feasible plan, and they called Mike to them, confiding in him to an extent that he became familiar with what they wanted him to do. He gladly promised to do all they asked, while Mrs. O'Doyle was even more emphatic than her husband. If Ned feared to broach the subject to his father, the moment he did so the latter was elated over the plan.

"It is the best you can do, boys, and you must lose no time in starting. Do not worry a bit over me. I know I am in good hands. My only regret is that I cannot go with you. I pray you may be able to find them in season."

By this time the morning was well advanced, but by some smart riding there was still a likely chance that they could reach Wailuku in season to take the steamer to Hilo. But every moment was priceless, and Lew and Mike brought the ponies to the door, while Ned bade his father a tearful good-bye. In five minutes the boys were again in the saddle and riding toward the windward shore at a furious pace, regardless of the condition of the way. Fortunately, that was better than it had been above Mike's home, and the hardy little steeds, refreshed by their stop, needed less urging than formerly to make their feet fairly fly down the mountain road.

They soon descended well down on the windward slope of Maui, the scrubby, stunted growth of the mountains being replaced by that of a richer soil. Broad hedges of flowering lantanas hemming them in on either hand, they found themselves in vast forests of papaia, algaroba, and breadfruit trees. Then the sound of rushing water reached their ears, when Ned said :

"We are coming to the river Wailuku, at the mouth of which is the town by that name. This stream comes from the Iao Valley, of which I have spoken. On its banks not very far beyond here was fought the decisive battle between the last King of Maui and Kamehameha I. It is said the dead fell so thick and fast that the bodies dammed the water of the river, from which it got its name, meaning 'the Water of Destruction.' But here we are at Wailuku, the most promising town on the island."

Lew's surprise was unbounded, when, as Ned finished speaking, without any previous indication of its presence, there burst upon his vision from the frontage of an exceptionally high wall of lantanas one of the most picturesque

villages he had seen in Hawaii. Under the frowning brow of that giant Haleakala, which looks down upon it from a distance of scarcely two miles, like all Hawaiian villages Wailuku has a beautiful setting of tropical verdure and a fine sea view.

The natural beauties of the flowering city, however, had little attraction for them in their anxious state of mind. Both at once began to look for the expected steamer. Nowhere was it to be seen.

"I do not believe it has come yet," said Ned, hopefully. "In that case we shall have time to make arrangements in regard to the ponies, and be ready when it does come."

Ned proved a true as well as a hopeful prophet, and they had just returned from taking the animals to the designated place when the whistle of the steamer was heard, as it came steaming down Kahului Bay.

"I hope the steamer won't stop long here," said Lew. "What is the trouble, Ned? Have you lost anything?" for his companion was searching his pockets at a frantic rate.

"I should think I had!" replied Ned, huskily. "I have lost my pocketbook!"

"Have you looked in all of your pockets?"

"Yes, and it is gone. It is no use to hunt any more. It is gone with every cent of money I had."

Lew knew his own amount of money was small — very small. But, wishing to encourage his friend as much as possible, he said:

"Oh, well, we can get along without it, can't we? I have a little — a few dollars — which are at your command."

"I thank you, Lew, but there are our passages to be paid to Hilo, while the chances are we shall need considerable.

I was careful to take three hundred dollars with me. Now it is all gone."

"Who could have robbed you, Ned? Or did the pocketbook slip out of your pocket?"

"I think it got out of my pocket somehow. Now that I recall it, I remember that while I lay over the pali of Eka, helping to get father on to the rock, I felt something slip out of my pocket. I did not think anything of it then, but it was my pocketbook. My money is at the bottom of the pali."

"Then we must go back there."

"Think of the time we shall lose. No; we must go on to Hilo in some way. A few hours' delay may mean life to mother and Grace. Here comes the steamer as near as she can come to the shore. Let's go out in one of the boats and we will see what we can do. If the captain happens to know our family I may be able to get passage on credit."

Amid the bustle and confusion of the arrival of the steamer and the preparations for a speedy continuation of her trip, Ned and Lew sought the busy captain as soon as it seemed prudent. He was an American, and he replied to them very civilly, but the mention of the name of Merriweather had an effect contrary to what Ned had fondly hoped for. He denied knowing the family, though he may have heard of it. If they had no money to pay their passage he might let them go on to Hilo if they would work out their fare. Of course they gladly accepted this offer, and five minutes later they were among the busiest assisting in the changing of the steamer's cargo.

The stop in the bay of Kahului was brief, and almost before they were aware of it, the steamer, which was named *Waimea*, was again heading along the rugged coast of the Switzerland of Hawaii, never losing sight of the grand

panorama of natural beauty. As the most that was expected of them was to assist in the shifting of cargoes at the different stopping-places, they soon found it convenient to speak to each other. The first words of Ned to Lew, as they stood by the *Waimea's* lee rail, bore the startling intelligence :

"It looks so we were in for trouble, Lew. Marks is on board the steamer!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FOURTH WONDER OF MAUI.

"MARKS on board the steamer, Ned!" repeated Lew, unable to realise the unpleasant fact. "You must be mistaken."

"I wish I was, Lew, but it is the truth. I saw him just as we were starting."

"Did he see you?"

"I think not then, but I am sure he has since. He looked at me as black as a thunder-cloud, and then as smiling as a lantana blossom. I suppose he thought he had me in a cage."

"Do you suppose he has seen me?"

"Without doubt. Oh, he's a sharp-eyed one. I should like to know what brings him down this way."

"No good, I'll warrant. What do you propose to do in this case? He will make trouble for us at the first opportunity."

"He wouldn't be Capt. Gustavus Marks if he didn't. But I do not know of any charge on which he can arrest me on the steamer. What he will do when I get to Hilo I cannot foretell. At any rate, we can do no better than to put on bold faces and trust to our wits to pull through. Here he comes now!"

Lew had a good chance to see the man, though both he and Ned pretended to be very busy just then. Captain

Marks, glancing toward them with an ugly scowl on his features, passed on without speaking to them. The boys breathed easier when he was out of sight, though knowing then they were not clear of him, whose presence boded them evil. Finding their duties far from onerous, they had ample opportunity to watch the varying scene along the shore as the steamer ran close in toward some bold point of land, or sped across a narrow bay, keeping the coast thus alternately in plain sight or at a hazy distance. In studying these landscapes they, in a measure, forgot their troubles, and even the close proximity of Capt. Gustavus Marks.

The next stop after leaving Wailuku was Sprecklesville, the headquarters of Maui's immense sugar mills and plantation. Here Ned told Lew they were opposite the neck of lowland connecting West and East Maui.

"We are leaving the grandest of Maui scenery behind, but before long I will show you a sight which will dazzle your eyes. You have learned that Maui has the most productive cane fields, the biggest sugar plantation, and the mightiest volcano in the world, and pretty soon I will show you the largest orchard on the globe."

"I did not know there were apple orchards here."

"Certainly, orchards of the ohia. I do not think you will deny their claim to be classed with that fruit. Surely there are no prettier, more juicy, and more luscious apples than those that grow on the Hawaiian ohia. As this is the harvest month, when the fruit is just ripening, if we run into Koola, as I expect we will, I will point out to you the fourth natural wonder of Maui, her immense apple orchard."

Ned was right in thinking that the *Waimea* would approach Koola, and Lew gazed on a sight he will never forget. Opposite a portion of the shore he saw what looked

at first like a vast stretch of timber land. But as they drew nearer he could see that these trees, many of them giants in stature, were laden with fruit. At first, on account of their shape, he fancied it was a stupendous pear orchard, but Ned soon undeceived him.

"They are the ohia, the native apples of Hawaii, one of which you tasted yesterday before getting to the plantation of Mauve. That was a white one and had a sort of flat, acid taste. You will notice that many of these are red or pink in colour. Those are a fairly good sweet apple. You will observe that both pink and white are of good size."

Lew had already seen this, and he had also noted that these wild apple-trees were of great size, some of them fifty feet in height. Loaded with their enormous burden of fruit, they presented a beautiful sight. This tract of orchard reached from the shore to the mountainside, and up and down the coast farther than he could see.

"Those largest trees have one hundred and fifty bushels of apples on them," said Ned. "The strip of orchard is ten miles wide at places and twenty miles in length. Think of an orchard ten miles by twenty in area, and bearing an amount of fruit beyond computation! How does that compare with your New England orchards?"

"I should think Hawaii could supply the world with apples," replied Lew.

"So they might a good part of it, but unfortunately this orchard is not as profitable as it looks. Except as food for the numerous birds and insects that infest it, and the few which are plucked from time to time by the people living near by as they are ripening, no use is made of them. They have no commercial value."

"Why not?" asked Lew, innocently.

"Because within a week from the day they are taken from the tree every one would be a rotten mass. They will not keep long enough to be worth the picking. Now for work."

As is the case with most Hawaiian ports, the steamer could not get very near the landing, having been obliged to anchor nearly half a mile from the shore. But boats laden with such merchandise as was intended for this place were sent ashore, while at the same time others put out from the dock, which was covered with a miscellaneous collection of corn, potatoes, — sweet and Irish, — some household effects, and bales of goods for the steamer. At one side stood five or six persons, evidently forming a family, waiting to go aboard. In the background Lew saw a good-sized herd of cattle, intended, as he had to learn, to be passengers for one of the ports on Hawaii.

"Hurrah!" cried Ned, as he discovered the noisy herd, "there is going to be some fun. If you have never seen cattle loaded on an inter-island steamer you will now. You and I will be expected to help, or I am no judge."

The cattle were kept in readiness for their turn until everything else for the steamer was taken on board. Then, the last bag of potatoes, a crate of chickens, and half a dozen squawking geese safely transported to the hold of the *Waimea*, one of the most novel and exciting experiences in which Lew had ever figured began. The herd of cattle was driven down close to the water's edge, and the foremost urged out into the warm tide. Some of the creatures objected to this course, while others quietly obeyed. Natives, with long lines having a noose in one end, stood ready to throw the lasso over their heads. And the way those Hawaiians tossed the slipping noose over the horns of those wild bullocks would have put to shame an ordinary cowboy's skill.

No sooner was the stout line drawn taut than the lassoer, who was mounted on a trained pony, dashed into the water and alongside one of the boats. The end of the rope would be quickly fastened to the boat's rail, and as soon as eight or ten had been secured in this manner another boat would take this one with its live cargo in tow, when, amid the furious splashing and bellowing of the terrified brutes, the tumbling and struggling of the light craft thus surrounded, the half-mile passage to the steamer would be made.

Once alongside the *Waimea*, a rope, with a hook in the end, connected with which was a sort of harness to pass under the body of the bullock, was lowered from a crane. Two of the men in the rear boat would then pass these straps under the body of one of the creatures and up over its back, and, slipping the rings on to the big hook, signal that everything was in readiness for the hoisting. Then, as the stentorian "heave-o!" rang out, lo! Mister Ox would rise dripping from the flood to the deck of the steamer.

Ned and Lew were assigned to one of the boats used in towing the wild cattle to the steamer, and, with the snorting, struggling creatures all about them, they had a lively experience. Finally the last lot of the refractory animals were fastened with their heads close to the rail of the boat, and order given to those ahead to pull out to the steamer. So far there had been no mishap or accident, and no bullock had escaped. But this time, when they were about half-way to the *Waimea*, one of the biggest and ugliest bullocks managed to throw off the noose about his head. With a roar of triumph he turned and swam for the shore.

Every one felt that the wild brute would gain the shore and escape the mob of spectators there, and those who had

been foremost in getting the cattle into bondage stood inactive, while the angry officer in charge of the work shouted his orders to recapture the animal.

The sight of the swimming bullock fired the warm blood of Ned Merriweather, and, seeing all the others looking on in such abject hèlplessness, he resolved to make a desperate effort to recapture the escaping swimmer.

"Look sharp for me, Lew, and hold my jacket while I am gone!" he cried, and before his companions could realise his intentions he had sprung head first into the water, and was swimming swiftly after the fleeing steer.

"Come back, young man!" called out the officer, alarmed that one whom he had not expected had gone to the rescue. "You will find more than your match before you overtake and capture that wild bullock. He swims like a native and he has got horns like a swordfish!"

If Ned heard the warning he did not show any signs of giving up his exciting race, while the bullock, finding he was pursued, swam on with greater fury than before. Trembling for the safety of his friend, Lew watched the exciting scene with anxious looks.

CHAPTER XIX.

MARKS'S FIRST MOVE.

THE best swimming Hawaiian who witnessed that scene might have envied the ease and rapidity with which Ned Merriweather glided through the water until he was close upon the frightened bullock. That animal now seemed to redouble its efforts, but in spite of that Ned was soon abreast of the creature, and so near he could have touched its shoulder. Watching a favourable opportunity, he caught one hand on the animal, and the next instant was astride its back.

Loud shouts now rang from the onlookers, but no one dreamed even then the daring boy would effect anything by his bold efforts. But Ned had ideas of his own, and one of them was not to give up. As soon as he had gained a firm seat, he leaned forward and dealt the bullock a smart blow on the side of its head with his open palm.

The maddened creature bellowed out its rage, and swam the faster toward the shore. But another blow caused it to turn its head, and at the fifth attack it changed its course, so it was swimming back toward the boat. By striking it in this way on one side of its head and then on the other, Ned managed to guide his horned steed into the midst of its mates. Willing hands lending their assistance, it was soon made as fast as any of them to the boat. Again the order

was given to pull for the steamer, and without further mishap the entire lot of cattle were raised on board the *Waimea*, which immediately after weighed anchor, and steamed furiously down the coast.

It was already sunset, and it was evident to Ned they would not reach Hilo until late in the next day.

"If I had known the *Waimea* was going to stop at every little port on the way I should have taken a second thought before travelling across Maui to catch her. We shall never get to Hilo at this rate."

"If we had not come across Maui we should not have found your father," said Lew. "To have missed —"

"I know it, Lew, and I ought not to murmur. It was all for the best, though I cannot help getting anxious about mother and Grace. I hope father will have good care until we get back."

"I think Mike and his wife will do the best they can by him."

"So do I. At any rate, it was the best we could do to leave him there. Have you noticed Marks since we left Koola?"

"I think he went below about that time. What was it the captain said to you, Ned?"

"Oh, praised me a little for the way I swam after that steer. It was not worth all the fuss they make about it."

"It may prove a good thing for you to have the friendship of the captain, Ned. That was the finest swimming I ever saw."

"Wait until we get to Hilo, if you want to be astonished in that way. They boast of the swimming and diving at Wakiki, but it is nothing compared to the surf riding at Hilo. They fairly live in the water there. That is true in

more senses than one, for it is the common expression that it rains every day in Hilo, so whether in the sea or out of it you are sure to get a ducking."

As Ned and Lew were not called upon to do the work of regular hands, they had plenty of opportunity to watch the shifting landscape of East Maui until nightfall, which comes in that latitude very soon after sunset, had hidden the wild shore from their view.

"We must be in the Alenuihaha Channel, between Maui and Hawaii," said Ned, after awhile, "and there will be no more stops for us until we reach Kohola, where I understand we are to leave a good share of our load. Kohola, perhaps I need not tell you, is on Hawaii, the largest of the seven isles."

"You must have been over Hawaii considerably," said Lew.

"I have been pretty well over all of the islands, including the four that are not large enough to hold inhabitants. It is about three hundred miles from the upper extremity of Kaui to the lower end of Hawaii, and the sum of all their territory is a little over six thousand square miles, or just the size of the two New England States, Rhode Island and Connecticut, and a little smaller than Massachusetts alone. Speaking of Kaui reminds me that it was on that island Captain Cook first landed in 1778, at a place for which this steamer seems to be named, Waimea. He was killed on the southwestern coast of Hawaii, at a place called Kaawaloa, the spot being marked by a monument erected in 1874.

"You have seen enough of it to get a fair idea of the 'Island Kingdom,' as it is called sometimes. You have seen a fair, in fact a favourable, specimen of its flora, while its fauna is not so remarkable. The only animals domesticated by the ancient Hawaiians were the dog, hog, and a few

fowls, while in the forests they had nothing more dangerous to fear than mice and lizards. Cattle and horses have been imported. As you know, many of these now run wild, and it is often some one has a thrilling adventure with some of them. Hogs have run wild, too, until I have heard of some hairbreadth escapes from wild boars. Wild dogs in many cases have proved a source of discomfort if not of danger. Some years since a party of sportsmen brought some deer to Hawaii. These have increased and become quite plenty on Oahu, but as they flee to the lantana thickets there has been very little sport in hunting them.

"Of all the islands I like Oahu best, though there are many fine scenes on the island we are approaching. It comprises nearly two-thirds of the area of the entire group, being eighty miles long and a little over seventy wide. Taken all in all, it is the most inaccessible, and it is estimated that less than one square acre in fifty is fit for cultivation. The population is more than half natives, though at Hilo we shall find as large a proportion of foreigners as we did at Lahaina and Honolulu. The great staple of the islands to-day, sugar-cane, was found growing on Hawaii in its native state so rank and of such remarkable sweetness as to attract attention. The Chinese were the first to attempt to extract some of its sweetness, but it was an American firm which established a mill at Koloa for the making of sugar. That was in 1835, and the mill was a rude affair run by horse power; next, water was applied, and now steam does the work. As soon as the natural richness of the island was known, foreigners from every nation flocked here, until you see Hawaii what it is to-day."

"Here comes Marks!" whispered Lew. "I wonder why he avoids me so, and I should like to know where I have

seen him before. Ned, the image of that man seems to be almost constantly before my eyes, and last night I dreamed of him. I thought he stood over me, with a look on his countenance I shall never forget. It seemed a strange combination of hatred and pity. One moment I thought he was going to plunge a knife into my heart, and the next that he was going to clasp me in his arms as he might a friend. I can't understand it. See! he has turned away. He pretends not to see us."

"But he is watching us as a cat does a mouse. I don't know how he feels toward you, but I am sure he hates me. Say, don't you feel sleepy?"

Lew, who had not felt like speaking of it first, acknowledged that he did. He need not have been ashamed of it, for he had not obtained a night's good sleep since he had come to Hawaii.

"Let's turn in. No danger but we shall be called when we are wanted."

Lew needed no urging to do that, and five minutes later they were both sound asleep, the rolling of the sea soothing them into the rest they required. Neither awoke until the noise and confusion of moving heavy bodies on the steamer's deck broke in on their slumber, when they hastened to the scene of bustle and activity.

The *Waimea* had steamed down the weather coast of the great island, and now lay at anchor off the rugged little town of Kohola, which is located on the extreme northern point of Hawaii.

Ned and Lew immediately lent their assistance to the work of unloading such of the cargo as was to be left here. This took until broad daylight, and the sun was its size above the distant sea as the *Waimea* resumed her way.

The boys again having leisure took up a position on the lee side, where they could watch to the best advantage the shore of Windward Hawaii.

"Captain Norton does not seem to be in any hurry about reaching Hilo," said Lew, who shared his companion's impatience over the delays.

"No; but as it is less than seventy miles now, we shall very likely get there before night. It is our anxiety to get to Hilo which makes our passage seem so slow, I suppose. If I only knew they were safe for the present, I should feel so much easier. But I suppose we must make the best of our situation, and be ready to improve the first opportunity to go to their assistance."

Ned was considerable of a philosopher, and, knowing the uselessness of repining, he soon interested Lew and himself in pointing out and describing the scenery and places of attraction which they were passing.

"The weather side of the big island has a scenery unsurpassed," he said. "Nowhere do you see such lofty mountain ranges, skirted at their base with a perennial greensward, and wrapped above in forests of such shadowy appearance; nowhere do you see such picturesque valleys, such gorges, such plains, and palis of such stupendous magnitude. The shore, you will notice, is almost continually formed of these rocky fronts, rising sometimes to the height of three thousand feet. If we were on the other coast we should not find such a bright green over all, for, while it rains so often on the windward side, on the lee side droughts are the rule rather than the exception."

"I suppose that is one of the volcanic mountains," said Lew, pointing to one of the gigantic figures, whose head was swathed in snowy skies.

"That is old Mauna Kea," replied Ned. "Mauna, in the Hawaiian language, means mountain, and Kea, snowy or white, so we should call it the White Mountain. It is almost fourteen thousand feet high, and standing on so small a base for its height makes it look more than that. Beyond is its companion, Mauna Loa, Loa meaning long; hence, Long Mountain. That is but a few hundred feet less in height than Mauna Kea. Last in the row, and lowest in height, being but four thousand feet high, is Kilauea, the highest active volcano in the world.

"Speaking of ravines, there are over a hundred of them on this side of Hawaii, the most of them beds of mountain streams running down to the sea. There are some prodigious waterfalls, as you may well imagine. One, near Waipio, at one leap drops seventeen hundred feet! Think of your Niagaras beside that."

"It must be a wonderful sight. But what are we running in here for? I see nothing but a solid rock hundreds of feet high. The steamer is about to be anchored."

"So it is. Look up to the top of the cliff and you will get an explanation to your mystery. Upon the top of the rock, as it looks from here, is a small settlement of people. Behind it are wide, fertile plains, over which large herds of wild horses and cattle roam at will."

It was no wonder Lew asked his question with so much surprise, for the scene following was a strange one. After steaming down to within a few hundred yards of the foot of a perpendicular bluff, a boat was sent out, with its crew and a couple of passengers who wished to be landed. On the top of the pali a sort of derrick had been built, with an arm running out over the brink, and fastened to its outer end a long rope reaching down to the water, carrying at its end a basket

large enough to hold two persons, or any commodity of about their size. The passengers sitting in the basket, the word was given to hoist, when they were borne upward until the whole affair looked like a speck in mid-air.

Waiting and watching until the basket and its human contents had been swung safely upon the rocky platform above, the boat's crew returned to the steamer; the *Waimea* again weighed anchor, and started on her tortuous course, now and then stopping at some small plantation to leave freight, twice to unload cattle. This last was a very simple performance compared to the loading, the creature being lowered to the water and left to swim ashore. There is nothing if not variety in an inter-island voyage around Hawaii. Now running in close to the shore, anon sheering off to find deeper water, always in sight of the broken coast, the boys had plenty to occupy their attention, when they were not needed at work. But Ned grew more and more anxious as they kept on.

"We have been making good progress the last hour," he said, as Lew and he turned from watching the island to the situation about them. "We are pretty sure — hilloa! what's up now?"

The *Waimea* had suddenly checked her speed and was behaving singularly. Captain Norton was giving hasty orders to some of his men, and the scene changed from a comparative quiet to one of excitement. They were not long in learning that something about the machinery was wrong. Though repairs were begun at once, it would necessitate considerable delay.

"This settles our getting to Hilo until after dark. But I don't care much. I have been watching that Marks lately, and he is keeping a closer watch over us than ever. I tell

you, Lew, he means to stop us in some way the moment we step into Hilo."

"I think so too, Ned. I have been thinking of a plan to outwit him. Isn't there some place this side of Hilo where we can leave the steamer?"

"Eureka, Lew! 'Great minds run in the same channel.' I have been thinking of the same thing. It is the best we can do. I will speak to the captain and see if we cannot. There he comes now."

"Do so, and I will wait here until you get back."

Lew saw his friend speak briefly with the commander, when Ned returned to his side. At the same moment, Marks stepped from behind a pile of merchandise, and began a conversation with Captain Norton.

"We are in luck," declared Ned. "The steamer has got to stop at a little place a few miles this side of Hilo, and he has no objection to our leaving then."

"I hope Marks did not overhear you, Ned. He was concealed near by while you were talking with the captain."

"I don't believe he heard what I said. I was careful to speak in a low tone. At Honomu we are to help unload the freight, but when the boat returns to the steamer we are to remain on shore. Then we will get to Hilo as best we can."

It was growing dusk as the *Waimea* entered the little roadstead at Honomu, and a scene of bustle at once began. There were three passengers to leave here, besides a small amount of cargo. The boat had been lowered from the davits, the cargo let down, and Ned and Lew were about to join the other passengers, when Captain Marks stepped brusquely in front of them, exclaiming:

"You do not leave the steamer here."

CHAPTER XX.

AN UNEXPECTED FRIEND.

NED'S surprise at the action of Captain Marks was greater than Lew's, though both of them looked upon the queen's officer with amazement.

"What does this mean?" demanded Lew, trying to pass the other.

"That you are ordered to report to the queen's court without further opposition."

"We have made no opposition, sir. We are peaceful citizens on a peaceful errand."

"Looks like it," sneered the officer. "Being so innocent you cannot object to going back with me to Honolulu."

The thought of the delay this would cause came simultaneously into the minds of the boys. To be taken back now meant certain failure in their plan of rescue of those in peril.

"No, no, Captain Marks!" exclaimed Ned. "If the queen wishes to see us we will appear at her court in a few days, — a week at the outside. But now — "

Marks checked him by an exclamation of disgust.

"You must think I am a fool. But I will tell you this much, that you are going back with me on the first steamer which leaves Hilo. Until then you will consider yourselves as my prisoners."

The appearance of Captain Norton at this juncture changed the drift of the conversation.

"Hilloa! what is up, Captain Marks?" demanded the commander of the *Waimea*.

"These young fellows have planned to leave the steamer here, and I have forbidden them doing so."

"That's the trouble, is it? Well, that is all right, as they asked my permission to do so, and I have granted them the privilege."

"But they have not got mine."

"I was not aware it was necessary for them to do so," said Captain Norton, without betraying any trace of surprise.

"Under ordinary circumstances it would not be, Captain Norton; under existing conditions of affairs it is very important. I am one of the queen's officers, sent by her royal Excellency's orders to bring these young fellows back to Honolulu with all expediency possible."

"Ah!" exclaimed Captain Norton, "that puts a different face on the matter. What is the charge against them?"

"Openly spreading sedition. The queen certainly has the right to bring her enemies to account."

"I suppose so, most assuredly, Captain Marks. So you purpose to take these young men to Honolulu, from whence I judge they came, though it is only from Wailuku they have come with me?"

"I do, captain, and I shall expect you to help me."

"You want them to remain on the *Waimea* till we get to Hilo?"

"They must, captain."

"Very well."

Turning to the wondering boys, he added, sternly:

"You men, go below and remain in the mess-room until you hear from me. Not a word. I am commander here and you are subject to my orders."

Ned and Lew felt their hearts sink within them, and for a moment they were inclined to make a bold break for freedom by leaping overboard. Happily, better judgment prevailed, and in silence the two turned away, leaving Marks describing the difficulty he had had in hunting them down. Then they heard Captain Norton order a seaman to keep watch over them.

"What shall we do now?" asked Lew. "We must not go back to Honolulu."

"We won't," exclaimed Ned. "We must and will outwit this Marks somehow."

How that was to be done was a riddle hard to solve, and they were discussing plan after plan as they heard the steamer weigh anchor.

"We are again on our way to Hilo, and it won't take us more than an hour to get there. I don't believe Marks has any legal authority to arrest us, but the fact of his being a queen's officer from a military point of view makes him a formidable enemy. I can't see our way clear to elude him. Is that man placed to watch us —"

At this moment a messenger from Captain Norton requested them to meet him in his stateroom at once. Ned looked upon Lew and Lew looked upon Ned, with an inquiry which said in intent if not in words:

"What does this mean?"

"It will be for your interest to see the captain as soon as possible," said the messenger.

"We will go now," replied Ned.

They found Captain Norton busy looking over a pile of

papers, but he brushed them aside as they entered, and, with a more kindly expression on his countenance than when they had last seen him, he said :

"Well, boys, I have sent for you to find out what this sedition business means. Captain Marks has tried to explain without making me understand. Be as brief as possible, for we have little time to spare."

Ned resolved upon a bold, frank acknowledgment, and he said :

"Captain Norton, you are an American ?"

"Yes, thank God, and I am proud of the country I claim as my birthland. But what has that to do with what you have to say ?" Both the boys noticed a merry twinkle in the speaker's eye, which gave Ned courage to proceed.

"Being an American, Captain Norton, you will the more readily understand our situation," and without further hesitation he gave a succinct account of the abduction of his family and the object of himself and Lew in going to Hawaii.

"I understood something of your situation before," replied Captain Norton, "but I understand it better now. You will excuse me, I know, if I acknowledge that I recognised you the moment you introduced yourself at Wailuku ; but Marks was there and I did not think it policy to own to too much. You see I am in a delicate situation and have to act carefully. My sympathies are with you. Do you want any proof ? Here it is."

While speaking he had pulled from its place of concealment a new flag, — the starry banner of the land of the free.

"I keep it in readiness to fly from the top of old *Waimea* the moment I learn that Hawaii is free. Mark my word, I have my colours carried in secret about as long as I shall have to.

The queen is getting desperate. Affairs have moved very rapidly of late, and I can see that a crisis is near at hand, when Hawaii will throw off her shackles. This Marks and such men, who have no thought for the welfare of any but themselves, have injured the royal cause beyond estimate. But we have no time to discuss these matters here. I judge you do not want to go back to Honolulu with Marks."

"Not if we can help it, sir."

"You need not be afraid to trust me with any plan you may have. I am here to help you as far as I can without jeopardising my own safety too much. I can see that this Marks, the moment he has you in his power, can give you trouble."

"We have been thinking if there was some way for us to leave the steamer — "

"I have the same idea, and you will pardon me for interrupting you, as I feel that I ought to be on deck. There is a boat trailing from the *Waimea's* stern. Now when I go on deck I will find this Marks, and under some pretence get him to the forward part of the steamer. While I keep him there you can steal out, and, letting yourselves down by the rope, gain the boat. Then cut adrift and look out for yourselves. We have passed Alia Point, and you will have no difficulty in effecting a landing. No thanks, please. Give me five minutes and I will have this Marks out of the way. I wish you Godspeed."

Ned and Lew felt elated over this meeting with an unexpected friend, and after the generous commander had been gone five minutes they stepped cautiously from the stateroom, and made their way toward the steamer's stern. They saw a seaman here and there, but no one took any notice of them. The moon had not risen, and it was quite dark. The regular

swish of the water reached their ears, as they peered into the murky depths from the rail.

"I can see the boat," whispered Ned. "I will go ahead, and you can follow as soon as I jerk the rope."

The next moment he disappeared, while Lew anxiously awaited his turn. Hearing the steps of some one coming hurriedly that way an instant after Ned had gone over the rail, he caught upon the rope and followed like a flash down the line!

CHAPTER XXI.

THE BANANA PLANTER.

NED had not fairly reached the water before Lew was beside him.

"Hilloa, Lew! what made you follow so closely?"

"Our escape has been discovered. Hark! can't you hear the outcry? To the boat, — quick!"

Ned had already realised the necessity of prompt action, and the two swam swiftly toward the little craft towing at the end of the rope. By the time a general alarm had been made on the steamer, they had scrambled into the boat.

"Set us adrift as soon as you can," said Lew, seizing one of the oars in the bottom of the boat.

Ned was then unfastening the couplings, and the boat was free from the line, as lights appeared at the stern of the steamer. Ned caught up the remaining oar, and together the boys sent the slight craft rushing through the water in an opposite direction from that of the *Waimea*, which, to their joy, was still steaming ahead.

"Captain Norton will give us all the time he can," said Ned. "But he will have to lay to before long. Marks won't allow us to get away without giving us pursuit."

"We must row toward the shore as fast as we can," declared Lew.

"I am not sure but we had better go the other way for a

little while, as we cannot reach the land before they might overtake us. They will naturally think we will put in for the shore, and bend all of their energies in that direction. If we keep back this way we may escape them, and then put in when we feel safer to do so."

"Of course you are right, Ned. I did not think of that."

"It looks so the steamer is laying to, but Captain Norton has given us a good start. Yes, the lights are becoming stationary, and they are lowering the boats. I can imagine Marks's rage and excitement."

"Do you think he will find us?"

"I do not believe he will. But let us put ourselves farther out of his way. Do not be afraid but I can find the way back. I haven't lived in Hawaii so long without catching some of the natives' knowledge of the sea. They are regular water-fowls. Mauve was my teacher. See their lights yonder! They seem to be moving this way."

Nothing was said for the next five minutes, the only sound breaking the silence of the lonely scene being the steady swish of the water against the side of the boat. Finally, Ned stopped rowing, and Lew followed his example.

"We have gone far enough now. Let's watch their lights."

The lights to be seen were all so far away and near the shore they felt little uneasiness over their situation.

"You know Captain Norton said we were below Alia Point, in which case we must be off Onomea Bay, where we shall have but little difficulty in reaching the shore, as soon as we think it prudent."

After lying on their oars for nearly half an hour, and seeing the last light fade out in the distance, Ned and Lew began to row toward the shore. The night was too dark for

"'SET US ADRIFT AS SOON AS YOU CAN,' SAID LEW."

them to see anything distinctly, except here and there a bright spot on the dark wall of space, marked the home of some planter, while farther away the whole sky was illumined by the brilliant lamp of Kilauea, kept burning night and day.

"I wonder what Captain Marks said when he found we had fairly outwitted him," said Ned, as if pleased with the thought.

"Nothing to our credit, I'll warrant. That man is a mystery to me. I hope Captain Norton will not get into trouble on our account."

"So do I, too. But here we are close in to the shore. Look sharp and we will soon be high and dry. We have been lucky to come to such a good landing-place, though it must be some distance to the nearest plantation."

While speaking, Ned had steered the boat in toward the shore, and, as it grated on the pebbly beach, he and Lew sprang out.

"It seems too bad to lose the boat, but I think we had better send it adrift. To have it found here, might start our enemies on our tracks. I will see Captain Norton sometime, and pay him for it. His kindness helped us out of an awkward fix, to say the least."

With their united strength, they sent the light craft out over the water, and its dark outlines soon vanished in the gloom.

"Do you know where we are, Ned?"

"I don't know just how far we are from Hilo, but it can't be many miles. We are on the outskirts of a prosperous section of the island, as I judge. Just above here must be a road running parallel with the coast. Our first move will be to find it. See that light yonder, Lew, — the one which

burns so much brighter than the others? Let us hail that as a good omen, and shape our course in that direction."

Up from the shore, laid in golden sands and fringed with palms, the boys picked their way amid a prodigious growth of pineapples, breadfruit, candlenuts, bananas of enormous size, guavas laden with fruit as large as oranges and as yellow as lemons, and plantains, which seemed a sort of cousin to the banana, but have to be cooked to be eatable.

"The country around Hilo is uncommonly rich from the deposits of volcanoes in the years long since past," said Ned. "Given time to decompose, these lava beds make the richest of soils, which accounts for the great fertility of Hawaii. But these valleys, overflowing with their tempest of vegetation, are often cut in twain by deep gorges, and we had better keep straight back toward the mountain, until we come to one of the paths running back to the isolated plantations. Can you see our beacon, now?"

"No, the foliage has completely hidden it."

"Well, we will find it again as soon as we reach higher land. It can't be more than a mile away."

They had not gone much farther before Ned exclaimed:

"Hilloa! here we are in the path, which no doubt will lead us to our destination. As the light is in the direction of the city, the path will grow wider and plainer, as we keep on. All of the roads, or nearly all, leaving the city dwindle into mere bridle-paths and finally lose themselves in the mountains."

Their progress was now more rapid, and after following the path for nearly a mile they reached what looked to them in the night like a big forest of bananas. The fruit was in every stage of development. It seemed to Lew he had not

seen such enormous trees, and the leaves were of prodigious size.

"It must be the man we are hoping to find is a bànana planter," explained Ned. "There are a few who make this kind of crop a specialty. Most of them are rich, too, though they do not make their money from the sale of the fruit alone. Really there is not much money in that, but there are several ways of getting a profit from a banana-tree. In the first place, the leaves have a good sale to be used in packing, while on them is a sort of wax which meets with a ready demand. The juice of the tree makes an indelible ink that is called for, while the sap possesses tannin. The stems are utilised in making Manila hemp, which form fine mats and plaited works. So you see every part of the banana-tree is brought into use and profit. You don't get the fruit at its best in America, as it has to be picked green and ripened artificially. But here we are at the home of our banana farmer."

They had come in sight of a pretentious house standing a short distance below the path, which from this place became a respectable road. Twin rows of king palms stood on the sides of the path leading to the dwelling, with its wide veranda running completely around it.

"Before we seek admittance I think it will be well to find out what sort of a character the man is. Should he be a royalist it would be better for us to go farther before we throw ourselves on the mercy of any one."

"Can you tell by looking at him if he is a royalist or not?"

"I can form a pretty good idea. If he is an American I shall not hesitate to risk the chance of making our presence known to him. But the feeling against the ruling power is

not as strong here as at Honolulu, as they are farther removed from the seat of government and know less of the wanton waste of the public money by the queen and her supporters. Keep a sharp lookout from this vantage-ground, while I reconnoitre. If you see anything suspicious, whistle."

Without waiting for Lew's reply, Ned stole silently and rapidly down through the shadows of the growth, until he came into plain sight of the house. Like nearly all of the Hawaiian dwellings, this was trellised with blossoming vines and creepers. In Hawaii the doors and windows are always open, and thus Ned discovered with more distinctness than he might otherwise have done the appearance of a man seated before one of these openings calmly reading a paper. He was in his shirt-sleeves, and looked like a man past middle life, with a stalwart frame and a frank, good-natured countenance.

All this Ned saw at a glance, and then a low exclamation of joy left his lips, as he murmured, under his breath :

"It is he! Yes ; I am sure of that."

Then, without stopping to see more, he fairly flew back to Lew, announcing in a low tone to his surprised companion :

"We have had a hard time in getting here, Lew, but we are in luck at last. *I have found Joel Place!*"

CHAPTER XXII.

STARTING FOR THE VOLCANO.

LEW could hardly credit such a bit of good news, and he did not wonder at Ned's display of joy.

"Come with me, Lew, and we will make ourselves known. Joel, unless he has changed greatly since coming to Hawaii, will give us a warm welcome."

The banana planter had laid aside his paper and was standing in the doorway, as the boys approached his home. Now that he was seen in his full height he presented a tall, strong, well-knit figure, and looked what he was, despite his gray hair, a man in his prime. He soon caught sight of Ned and Lew, and watched them with curious interest as they approached, until Ned said:

"Good evening, Mr. Place," adding, as he extended his hand, "I hope you have not forgotten me, Joel."

"Why, Ned Merriweather, is this you? I am right glad to see you."

"No more so than I am to see you, Joel. This is my friend, Lewis Hiland, who has recently come to Hawaii from New England."

"Zounds, Ned! this is a pleasant surprise. I was thinking of your family this afternoon. Come in, come in, you are thrice welcome, and so is any one you might bring here. Aloha, Master Hiland, aloha!"

As Lew felt his hand enclosed by the other's powerful

palm he knew he had found a friend, and he felt drawn toward the planter, who possessed blunt ways, but a warm, sympathetic heart.

"How are the folks, Ned?"

"Joel, we are in trouble. It is that which has brought us to Hawaii."

"In trouble, my boy. I trust it is nothing but what I can help you out. Take a seat and tell me all about it. I was going to speak to my folks, but I want to hear what you have to say first."

Ned at once made Mr. Place familiar with what the reader already knows, the planter often interrupting him with exclamations of wonder.

"If you had told me Honolulu had been burned up you would not have surprised me more. Why, I can't realise it. Your father and mother carried off in that way? If it had been your father alone it would not have seemed so unreasonable. The queen do this? Never, Ned Merriweather! She may be fickle-minded in some respects, and in her desperate situation resort to actions which are not above censure, but she could not be guilty of such a piece of folly as this. No, no, mark my words, there is somebody else at the bottom of this, and some other than political cause the reason for this infamous course. Why, it would send the man to the penitentiary for life if he were caught."

"I agree with you, Joel. I am very sure Marks is doing it, and that he has made tools of some of the natives in carrying out his plans."

"Looks like it. I always fight shy of a man who deserts one party to espouse another with the enthusiasm he has shown. But about that league of the Hawaiians, zounds! it stumps me. I have lived forty odd years right in Hawaii,

and never dreamed of such a thing! I have heard others hint at it, but I always laughed the one who told it out of the idea."

"I don't think Mauve meant to deceive me. He believed it, and I believe he lost his life by some such an organisation."

"Mauve was honest. The more I think of it the more I am inclined to put some credence in what you say of it. It is possible. I tell you it is hard to choke out old roots. Mauve was doubtless right. In that case there is some likelihood of your finding your mother and sister at one of the volcanoes. The old seat of worship, according to the traditions, was at Haleakala, on the island of Maui; but very likely that has changed. Mauna Loa would be the more likely place for it now, or Kilauea. Say," bringing his fist down upon his knee with a resounding thwack, "zounds! I have thought of something which sets my head in a whirl. It gives me a key to the mystery. You have heard of Oalau the Prophet?"

"Mauve used to speak of him occasionally, but always with awe. It was claimed he was the man who killed Captain Cook."

"The same, though of course I look on that claim as nonsense. But he is old enough to have been there at the massacre. You will notice that I say *is* old enough, for this Oalau is living!"

"Can it be possible?" asked Ned, in great surprise. "It has been supposed that he was buried under an overflow of lava at Kilauea during the last public sacrifice to Pele, more than twenty-five years ago."

"I know it, and he was said to be a hundred years old then. But, as true as I am speaking, only last summer I ran across that man up in the mountain wilds, or I am the

most mistaken person living. I was wandering off through the wilderness between Kilauea and Mauna Loa, to run upon the worst specimen of a witch doctor I ever set eyes on. He looked so he had been on earth since the day of creation. I know, from the descriptions I have had and my memory of the man, he was Oalau the Prophet. I'll set it down that he is at the head of this league, if there is one. I never thought it worth while to tell any one I had met the old scamp."

Ned had heard of this strange witch doctor styled Oalau the Prophet, and to learn that he was living, when everybody had supposed him dead for many years, was an astonishing piece of news. They continued to talk of the aged Hawaiian and the affairs that more closely concerned them, until Mr. Place exclaimed, peremptorily:

"This won't do, boys. You need rest and sleep if you undertake half you have in mind. So away with you to your mats. Don't think about rising until I call you. Never fear but I will do that soon enough."

Mr. Place came nearer the truth than he had expected in his last statement, for the boys were sound asleep the next morning when his call awoke them to a realisation of their situation. It was no wonder even Ned slept longer than he had intended, for both had been deprived of their sleep for nearly a week, except such snatches as they had been able to get at odd places. But both were quickly wide awake, and in a few minutes were eating the meal their kind hostess had prepared. Lew found Mrs. Place as kind as her husband, and she was very much wrought up over the fate of the Merriweathers.

"I have done a big amount of thinking since you came last evening," declared Mr. Place. "Ned, I have mapped out your best route. I wish it was so I could go with you,

but that is out of the question. I do not feel that I am doing my duty by you, but something tells me I can do you more good by remaining here. I will keep a sharp lookout on the actions of Marks, and let nothing escape my observation. I have two ponies under saddle for you, and if you think my counsel is worth listening to, I will give you my plan."

"I want to hear it, Joel. You are very kind."

"In the first place, then, you will be obliged to go almost into Hilo before heading for the mountains, if you take the volcano road. It is thirty miles to the crater. It strikes me you had better not take the public road at all, if you can avoid it. Your errand is one of secrecy, and no doubt this league of heathens have spies all about. If they have not, Marks has. He will naturally think you are on the island, and watch for you. Therefore I am going to send you to your destination by a roundabout route, which will be safer if longer. To start right on this way you will have to go within sight of Hilo, after which you will follow an old trail of the natives leading originally toward Mauna Loa, which you know, Ned, is west of north of Kilauea and some miles farther from here. But that does not matter. In the region of Kulana the path you will follow ends, but fortunately you will be above the dense growth and in the section of bare lava beds. Under the flank of the mountain lives a sort of retired missionary all alone, his parish having died or moved away, if he ever had one. You had better leave your ponies with him until your return. After getting there you will have to shape your own course. I do not suppose you have a compass?"

"No, sir."

"I thought so, and here is mine. You know how easy it

is to get lost in a Hawaiian thicket. Louisa has put you up a luncheon. Now, have you any firearms?"

"A pair of revolvers, Joel."

"What you may need. I hope you will forgive me for meddling with your business."

"There is nothing to forgive, Joel, and your advice is valuable. As there is no need of any longer delay, we might as well be starting, Lew. I hope, Joel, it will be so we can repay —"

"Tut, tut, Ned, none of that. The ponies are at the door, and if you must be going, I bid you Godspeed. You will just about reach Montjoy, the missionary, to-night, and you won't do any better than to stop with him. Remember to turn off at the broken-topped palm just beyond the bridge. The path is dim, but you will be able to follow it if you keep your eyes open.

"By the way," he continued, as the boys vaulted into the saddle, "I want to caution you, Lew, to look out for the pony you are riding. He has queer quirks sometimes. I think he will carry you through all right, though I had intended for Ned to ride him."

"I think I can manage him all right," replied Lew, and with the good-byes of the kind family ringing in their ears, the boys dashed away.

As it was difficult to keep up a conversation, they rode on in silence, save for the clatter of the ponies' heels and the roar of the surf in the distance. Had Ned been able to discourse with his usual fluency, he would have gone into raptures over the scenery, and told his companion that what Honolulu tried to be, Hilo was without an effort. Their way was sufficiently elevated for them not only to overlook the sea on their left hand, but to get glimpses of the town they

were approaching at a swinging pace. Finally, Ned, as if he could stand this silence no longer, after catching sight of the scene on the shore, stopped, and, pointing through a break in the forest, exclaimed :

" Look, Lew ! if you want to see the surf riders of Hawaii in their element."

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE SURF RIDERS.

UPON the right hand the wooded, broken slopes rose higher and higher, until meeting in the distance the foothills flanking that giant among volcanoes, Mauna Loa. Ahead was a brawling stream, looking at first like a silvery thread on the dark landscape winding down from the heights, but which, gathering strength and breadth at every bound it made over the dizzy crags, hanging now on some sheer precipice hundreds of feet high, anon leaping into fathomless gulches, emerged at last upon the plain overlooking the sea, where it made its final plunge. Afar stretched the blue Pacific, farther than the gaze could reach, calm and placid, its warm brow cooled by the northern wind. But it was neither to the right nor ahead, nor yet out over old ocean, that Lew's sight was directed by his companion.

They were here in plain view of the shore, from whose surging tide rose a continual roar that filled their ears, and it was there Ned pointed. The scene was such that it was no wonder the boys in their anxiety to go on should pause for a moment to admire. It was nothing less than a score or more of natives enjoying their morning exercises in the warm water. The surf at that place was favourable for the sport of the Hawaiians, though more timid swimmers

might well have hesitated before venturing into a tide which rose and broke in such swells.

There were young men and old, women, boys, and girls, many of them carrying in their hands that inseparable assistant of the Hawaiian swimmer, the surf board. This was a thick but light plank about two feet wide at the middle, tapering toward the ends, and six to eight feet in length.

"Isn't it a sight worth looking on?" asked Ned. "I do not believe the Hawaiian has his equal in the world when in the water. Look at that big, fat, gray-headed man! How he handles his *Papa-he-nula*, as their wave-shaped boards are called in their language. They are made from the wood of the breadfruit-tree, are kept well oiled and cared for, as you may well imagine. Watch that little fellow on the right. See him wading out from that rock so as to get into the line breakers; now he dives, and you won't see him again unless you look for him through a glass some time from now on the smooth water half a mile out to sea. But if you keep watch for him he will return in a way which will amaze you."

Lew watched the scene with enchanted gaze. He had never seen anything like it. Nor were he and Ned the only spectators, as the shore was lined with people who had come out thus early to witness the morning's pastime. After seeing the fat swimmer ride the swells safely in to disappear mysteriously under the tide, just as the wave was about to break on the shore, he looked for the reappearance of the boy swimmer, who seemed bent on showing off to his best advantage.

"There he comes, with half a dozen others!" cried Ned. "Look for him on the left."

Lew had already seen the youthful expert, as at that

moment he rode into sight on the crest of a high roller, lying face downward on his board. Then, as the wave sped on, he went down into the trough until lost to sight, huge combers fretting the top of the wave as his board struck the ground. An instant later he reappeared, poising himself on the front guard of the oncoming breaker, by dexterous movements of hands and feet always keeping just on the verge of the brink, as if ready to dive, carried on by the power of the swell behind him at the rate of fifty miles an hour. Borne on this matchless steed, the brave young Hawaiian sprang nimbly to his feet in the midst of his exciting race, and, waving his hands to the delighted lookers-on, he uttered loud shouts of triumph. Seeming every moment about to be engulfed by the pursuing breaker, whose white crest overtopped him, at the instant when that seemed inevitable he slipped from off his board and darted under the surf. Later he was back to the smooth sea ready to repeat his daring exploit or try some new feat. What he had done half a dozen companions had accomplished, though not many of them with the daring and agility of this boy of the surf.

"The undertow helps them to return," said Ned. "The great secret of their success is in mounting the breaker or roller at the right moment, and to keep exactly on the curl when it breaks. It is wonderful how they do it. Look to that fellow on the left, who is flung bruised and senseless on the beach, as a result of missing his calculation."

As pretty and thrilling as was the sight, the boys had not the time to spare to watch it, and, leaving the careless surf riders to their sport, they rode on their way, the ponies moving at what Lew considered a "dog trot." A Hawaiian pony seldom moves much faster, and generally that gait costs the rider a great amount of urging. So far the one

ridden by Lew had been docile enough, and he was beginning to think Mr. Place had tried to frighten him.

"We are approaching Wailuku River, the largest stream on the island," said Ned. "What a fine view we get of Hilo Bay, shaped like a crescent open to the sea, and said to be the most beautiful spot in the Pacific! That little black point forming its lower horn is Cocoanut Island. Hilo is the paradise of Hawaii. Its climate is slightly warmer than at Honolulu, its soil is equally rich, and on account of the frequency of rain its vegetation is the rankest and largest to be found. Notice the palms along the bay. Hilo is fairly embalmed in woods. You would hardly dream that a city of so much importance lay amid that forest."

Lew was gazing upon a dense mass of foliage, varying in hue from the crimson of the candlenut to the dark, glossy green of the breadfruit. As Ned had remarked, there was very little indication of a city. Here and there a church spire sent its pointed peak above the common level of the tree-tops in companionship with the slender shafts of the tall, annulated palms. Around this enchanting spot of perpetual summer the eye gazed on broad belts of country clothed with sugar-cane, melon, pineapple, and banana groves; cloudward, over woods and waters, hills and valleys, to snow-capped Mauna Loa, from continuous summer to endless winter.

"Hark!" exclaimed Ned, whose ears were always open, and as they stopped to listen outbursts of merry laughter were borne to them from their right and above them. "Look! we are just in season to see another and altogether different sort of Hawaiian sport, — coasting on bare ground!"

Ned had barely finished speaking when a strange sled, the strangest Lew had ever seen, shot into view. It was long —

twenty feet from end to end — and not more than six inches in width. Like a flash it shot over the grass-covered ground, carrying its occupant on toward the valley at a rate of speed which would have taken away the breath of one unused to such rapid transit.

Lew had seen so much, when he was suddenly aroused by a snort from his pony, which reared straight into the air. Then, with another snort, it sprang down the pathway at a rate which threatened to outrival the wild coaster! Lew managed to keep his seat, but beyond that he was powerless. After going a short distance the runaway turned a sharp corner into a cross-path, but did not slacken its furious pace.

Ned witnessed this break with horror. Expecting Lew would be thrown and killed, he urged his pony forward in pursuit. Coming to the corner and believing his friend had kept on directly ahead, he pursued that course, thus going every moment farther from Lew.

In the midst of his wild ride Lew was conscious of seeing some one in the pathway ahead, and of shouting to him for help. The man threw out his arms, but sprang aside as the frightened animal reached him. His cries serving to terrify the brute still more, it sheered into the edge of the bushes, when Lew was flung to the ground.

As miraculous as it seemed, he was not seriously hurt, was not even stunned by his fall, and before the man could reach him he was on his feet. The two were thus brought face to face within a few feet of each other. It would be difficult to tell which was the more surprised, as they exclaimed, in unison:

"Lewis Hiland!"

"Captain Marks!"

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE WILD LEPER.

BEWILDERED and confused by his fall from the pony, if Lew recognised the captain of the queen's body-guard at the same time his identity was discovered, the other was in a condition to act quicker. Producing a revolver, Marks exclaimed, fiercely:

"Stand where you are, young man. I don't want to shoot, but I shall if you move a hand or foot."

Lew realised that he was completely at the speaker's mercy. It is true the roof of a grass hut at the foot of the hill was to be seen, and farther away the chimney of a sugar mill, denoting that people were near by. At that moment one of the coasters shot past him on his right, the grass track of the sleds crossing here the bridle-path. But neither from the men nor the boys could he reasonably look for succour. He felt this without showing it in his speech or actions. Despite the threatening attitude, the flashing eyes and determined tone, brought face to face with him, he was surprised to find that he did not fear the American royalist.

"Captain Marks of the queen's body-guard, I believe," he said, calmly.

"You seem well posted, young man. Where is the precious scamp who was with you on the *Waimea?*"

"I cannot tell you, sir," was the truthful, yet misleading, reply.

"Was he drowned?" was the next question, asked with an eagerness which Lew did not fail to notice.

"Not to my knowledge, sir. But his fate does not concern mine. I want to know what you mean by this treatment, Captain Marks."

"Nothing to your harm if you know enough to do what is for your interest. What business had you following that young rebel, Ned Merriweather?"

"I was not aware, sir, Ned Merriweather was a rebel. But what has that to do with me? I have never interfered with you."

"What have you come to this far-away country for?" asked the other, suddenly changing the current of the conversation.

"I came, sir, to see my friend, Ned Merriweather, and on account of my health."

"So you are not well?"

"No, sir. I am afflicted with a lung trouble inherited from my mother."

"I should think you were in the last stages of consumption the way you have rattled around since you arrived on the islands," spoken with a sarcasm Lew did not fail to observe.

"Circumstances have been such, sir, that I have been pretty active whether I would or not."

"How is your cough?"

"It is already better. I am sure in a little while I shall be quite free from it."

"That is certainly encouraging. But it is unfortunate you have fallen into such disreputable company as soon as you got here. Now I have a favour to ask of you. I want you to get down on your knees."

There was something so strange in the man's conduct that

Lew suddenly thought that perhaps he was crazy. At any rate, he felt it was best for him to humour the other, and accordingly he obeyed his command.

"Clasp your hands," ordered the imperturbable Marks.

Lew did again as he was told. At that moment he thought of Ned, and wondered where he was. But Marks did not allow him time for much contemplation, for he said at once:

"I take it you have been brought up to tell the truth and to understand the meaning of an oath."

"My mother, sir, was a Christian woman, and she taught me to be honest in all my dealings and to trust in God."

"You do not mention your father."

"I have nothing to say of him."

"Ashamed of him, eh? I thought there might be something of this kind in your make-up. Now, if you can, I want you to swear that your sole purpose in coming to Hawaii was to get rid of your cough — to regain your health."

"It was, sir."

"Very well; arise. Now I want to say to you that I am your friend and not your enemy. What I ask is for your good. Your life will not be worth a forfeit if you remain longer with this young rebel of a Merriweather."

"I cannot help it, sir."

"If you will promise me that you will leave him at once, — go with me, — I will be your staunch friend, and I am a power at the court of the queen. You will go with me?"

"I cannot, sir. You give no reason why I should, and —"

A shrill cry broke in upon his speech, coming from the coasters above them. Both Lew and Captain Marks glanced hastily in that direction. It seemed that one of the coasters had failed to guide his narrow sled properly, and for his

mistake he had been hurled headlong to the earth, where he lay motionless. This accident did not seem to intimidate the others, and at that moment Lew saw a native boy preparing to take a wild passage to the foot of the hill. The sight suggested a way of escape to Lew, which, if desperate, he felt like attempting. Marks was temporarily thrown off his guard. What he would do if he remained with him was beyond his comprehension. At any rate it meant detention and delay, with a possibility that Ned would be drawn into the other's power and captured. He was anxious to be on the way to the rescue of the captives of the league of Hawaiian pagans. As these thoughts flashed through his mind, the young Hawaiian coaster started on his arrow-like flight. Without stopping to consider the result if he failed, Lew sprang forward, and, calculating to a nicety his chance, he threw himself upon the sled behind its dusky occupant!

If the Hawaiian was surprised, and there was good reason that he should be, he had neither the will nor the time to manifest it. As Lew found himself carried down the descent at lightning-like speed, the cries of the baffled Marks rang faintly in his ears.

Only those who have ridden on a toboggan have any adequate conception of the tremendous speed attained by one of these Hawaiian sleds over its grass path. Lew closed his eyes, but in a moment it was over. The speed began to slacken, until the long sled came to a stop, and his companion sprang to his feet, to stare upon his unbidden passenger with looks of mingled surprise and wonder. To Lew it seemed like awakening from an exciting dream. He had recovered sufficiently to explain to the young Hawaiian why he had thus stolen a ride, when a familiar voice called out from near at hand:

"Hilloa, Lew! what in the world are you doing?"

Looking about in amazement, Lew soon saw, a hundred yards from the spot where he had been left by the sled, standing between the two ponies they had borrowed of Mr. Place, as he held them by the bridles, Ned Merriweather, with a broad smile on his genial countenance.

"Why, Ned!" exclaimed Lew, in a transport of joy, "how came you here?"

"On the pony's back, of course, and a smart canter I have had, too, catching this refractory brute of yours. I was just coming back after you. It seems you prefer flying on a Hawaiian coaster to riding a skittish pony."

His mind clear by this time, and realising that Marks was likely to appear on the scene at any moment, Lew made a hasty apology to the young Hawaiian and joined Ned. As he took the rein of the pony he said:

"I have seen Marks just above here, Ned, and we had better get away as soon as we can."

"Let me ride that fractious beast. Though he seems docile enough now, there is no telling how soon he may be up to some of his didoes."

"Thank you, Ned," replied Lew, with spirit. "He won't find me off my guard again. Go on."

Seeing Lew's determination to master the pony, Ned did not offer to argue with him, but headed down the path at a canter. They soon reached the wooden bridge spanning the Wailuku, when Ned slackened his speed to say:

"Joel said the broken-down palm stood just beyond the bridge. Ha! there it is. We must turn off here, though it doesn't look so any one had been this way for an age. By and by we will stop for the ponies to breathe and to exchange explanations."

The trail — it did not deserve the dignity of being styled a path — was only wide enough for them to advance in single file, and on either hand it was walled in by the densest of tropical growths. It seemed to Lew every kind of tree and shrub and vine which he had seen, and countless others he had not seen, grew here in such a maze as to make it utterly impossible for a person to penetrate the tangled wood. Not only was the lower growth enveloped in meshes of vines and ferns, but the tallest of the forest-trees were the supports of that indomitable climber, the liana, which formed high in the air thick networks of entwining branches that swayed in the breeze like spider's webs built on a prodigious plan.

In the midst of this primeval scene, with the interlocking arms of the wilderness over their heads and the shining festoons of yam nodding in their faces, Ned stopped, saying:

"I cannot wait any longer to know what you have to say of Marks. Are you sure you saw him?"

"Not only saw him, but talked with him."

"You did! Explain what you mean." Then, at the conclusion of Lew's explanation, he said:

"That beats me. So he styles me a rebel? All patriots are looked upon as rebels until they succeed. Time will show Captain Marks who the rebels are. He is a traitor, but never mind that. So you declined to go with him, Lew? Who knows but what you might have been a soldier and ridden around in your bright uniform, the envy of all? But that will do. I would like to have seen him when he saw you flying off on that Hawaiian's sled."

"That coasting beats everything I ever saw, Ned. Is it a common practice here?"

"As common as coasting on the snow in New England. In fact, it is more common, for you can coast on snow only

in the cold weather, while the Hawaiian has all seasons for his pleasure. Of course he might slide for miles over the snow-fields of Mauna Kea, but as he has everything else different he prefers to coast where it is warmer, and over a track which the sun cannot take from him. If a grassy course cannot be found to his liking he makes a track that answers his purpose fully as well by placing slabs of smooth lava along the way. His sled is the greatest curiosity. It requires metal which will take the highest kind of polish, while the affair is from ten to twenty feet in length, though the runners are only from four to six inches apart. You may imagine it takes some skill to manage such a sled, and as to its speed, I need not speak of that. Accidents are very common among even the most expert. But listen! I thought I heard some one approaching."

A step was surely heard in the narrow pathway ahead, and while they waited and harkened, the wildest, most terrible-looking figure they had ever seen stood before them. Lew shuddered with horror at the frightful spectacle, while Ned whispered:

"It is the wild leper! We are lost!"

CHAPTER XXV.

A REMARKABLE ESCAPE — STORY OF THE WILD LEPER.

THE newcomer, who had appeared in the pathway of the boys, was a Hawaiian of stalwart figure, clothed in the scanty raiment worn by the natives before the advent of civilisation. But his size was not wholly natural. His tall form was swollen to nearly twice its actual growth, until the shining skin of the red, bloated limbs seemed ready to burst. His hollow eyes were bloodshot, his features haggard, and bore the awful spots of the leper, while the flesh was gone from some of the fingers. Taken all in all, he presented a sight to carry horror to the stoutest heart, and it was no wonder Ned and Lew gazed on him in awe.

A cry more terrible than the growl of any wild beast came from his bloodless lips, and he carried the butt of a two-barrelled rifle to his shoulder with startling rapidity, as he saw the two riders halted in front of him.

"More officers — more blood!" he cried, and he was about to fire, when Ned said, in alarm:

"Hold! we are not officers, but peaceful boys."

He had barely uttered the words, which seemed to arouse rather than pacify the wretched man, when a great commotion in the vines overhead was heard. Amid a series of gruff outcries and fluttering of wings a huge bird fell directly in front of the leper! In its struggles to find a resting-place it struck about midway on the barrel of the Hawaiian's

rifle. The strange action, the big, staring eyes looking into his, and the huge wings flapping in his face, frightened him so he turned and fled from whence he had come, uttering wild cries as he flew along the narrow path.

The boys watched him with feelings of relief, until they saw him turn into a path leading off to their right instead of keeping straight ahead.

"Joel spoke of a fork in the path," said Ned, "and that we must be sure and keep to the left. Let us get past that place before the leper changes his mind and comes back."

The clumsy bird, which had done them such good service, was tumbling about on the ground under his pony's feet. Urged forward thus as much by fright as Ned's prodding, the animal fairly flew over the soft earth.

Lew had no trouble in keeping his pony close upon the other's heels, and as they sped past the fork in the path, Ned shouted, exultantly:

"Good-bye, Mister Leper, and may we never meet again!"

They had ridden nearly four miles, and were beginning to leave the dense growth behind for more scattering groves of cocoanut and ohia trees, with a strip of lava bed reaching farther than they could see in front of them, when Ned pulled rein.

"We ought to thank that owl from the bottom of our hearts," he declared, fervently. "Lew Hiland, I don't half believe you realise what an act of kindness that foolish bird did in falling from his roost in that manner and at that time."

"I don't understand any of it," replied Lew, frankly. "In the first place, who and what is this leper? I never saw such a frightful creature in my life."

"That is because you have not been to Molokai. The

story of the poor fellow is very pathetic, and, as great a terror as he is, no one who has seen him can help pitying him. Hawaii has a most mournful chapter in her history, and in order that you may better understand the wild leper's situation I will give briefly the facts of the leper colony.

"In 1853 the first case of leprosy was discovered, brought by some Chinaman it was believed. So rapidly did the disease spread that twelve years later it had reached a stage where public safety demanded that those thus afflicted should be placed somewhere by themselves. Accordingly, the government, on January 3, 1865, ordered that a hospital should be established, and during that year a peninsula on the island of Molokai was selected as a place of colonisation for all lepers in Hawaii. A happier spot for isolation could not have been found, or one more secure, but fear of being parted from friends, and the terrors that the dread malady brings, often cause the poor victims to try every way to escape the officers who are sent to take them to the place of exile. The natives, having no fear of catching the disease, will contrive to conceal their afflicted friends, and in every way help to defeat the good intentions of the law. The way the native inhabitants associate with those suffering from leprosy, and their indifference to the spreading of this loathsome curse, has done much toward increasing the number of the victims. The Hawaiian has proved very susceptible to all diseases which were heretofore unknown to him.

"Among those who were doomed to banishment a few years ago was this wild leper, then a young man with a wife and two or three children. The disease was in its first stage, and, dreading the awful exile, which meant separation from his family for life, he took to the forests and defied the officers who were sent to capture him. He had armed him-

self with a rifle, and, aided by his family and friends, he successfully resisted all attempts to arrest him. He has killed five or six men who have tried to get him, and there is a big reward offered for his capture, but no one has been successful yet in getting it. He lives in the caverns of the mountains, and his food is wild fruits, and it is believed he occasionally kills one of the wild cattle roaming at large. He is now getting into the last stages of the complaint, and he cannot hold out much longer. Poor fellow! he must have ventured below his usual haunts this morning."

"I pity him," said Lew; "I pity them all. It must be a dreadful sight to see them in their hopeless banishment. What a fate and what a life the wild leper must live!"

"Very true, Lew; but I have not told the most pathetic part of his story. The Hawaiians are an exceedingly affectionate people, and he had a little girl he loved dearly. I think it was as much dreading a separation from her as anything which caused him to resist being taken away. He used to visit his family occasionally, and during one of these reunions the officers thought to surprise and capture him. But when they threatened to shoot him if he did not surrender, the little girl sprang into his arms, and with her before him he marched out into the woods, no one wishing to harm her. She used to visit him in his retreat, and finally she, too, took the dreadful malady and died in his arms."

"Is leprosy catching?" asked Lew.

"Under certain conditions it is, but as a rule it is not, — if the blood is poor, or one gets any of the poison in an open wound. Those who go to look after the lepers at Molokai never have caught it. But let us talk of a more pleasant topic. None of us are free from sorrow and suffering."

"I know it, Ned; but I shall never forget that poor

fellow. There is something else I want to speak of, that is the scarcity of birds and animals in Hawaii. Wherever we go we see very little of bird life. How quiet it seems without the songs of birds!"

"You expect everything in one place, do you, Lew? If we have very few birds, we have no snakes or venomous creatures lurking in the thickets. One is perfectly safe to go where he wishes without fear of being bitten by a snake or other deadly things. But game is scarce and confined to a limited variety. Wild geese are found about this island, and snipe, plover, and wild ducks on all of the islands. A kind of owl, which we have such good reasons for seeing, is quite common. Those, with a few feathered songsters, comprise the indigenous fowls and birds of Hawaii, while dogs, swine, and rats form the whole number of quadrupeds found on the islands by Captain Cook."

"Well, I think Hawaii puts her best foot forward, as the saying goes, and that there are dark spots she does not care to show."

"It is best to make the most of oneself. But a truce to argument. Let's move on if we would reach Montjoy, the solitary missionary, before night."

The boys had halted under a grove of ohias, and as they started they moved in single file over an immense expanse of lava of a grayish hue and generally of a rough surface. Where this coating was not on it was as smooth as glass, so the ponies could not keep on their feet. Lew was struck by the appearance of the oddly shaped surface of the whole area, which, seamed and wrinkled, was made up of hummocks, miniature valleys, pools still and smooth, spiral waves, caverns, and columns of fantastic forms.

"You see," remarked Ned, "that it began to cool in just

the shape it was in at the time, bubbling, boiling, tossing, rolling, and breaking in every conceivable manner. Generally it was of the *aa* or rough lava, though these glassy spots show the satin rock, or *pahoehoe* lava. What we see here represents a section of the cooled torrents which have flowed down this way from Mauna Loa in years past. There was a flow in 1881 which reached to within a mile of Hilo. You can imagine the consternation it carried to the inhabitants. It moved with such a slow pace that a person could have walked before it without being overtaken. It stopped in season to save the city, but it was a year in cooling off.

"In these phenomena we see the proof of the origin of Hawaii, which has been raised from the depths of the ocean, foot by foot, pile on pile, ridge on ridge, hill on hill, mountain on mountain, until Mauna Loa and Kea have been built by the volcanic forces at work in the interior. Each eruption has added something to the total amount, making fertile some sections, bringing life rather than desolation. From the hard, black rocks on the seashore to the minute particles of dust on the highest domes of her peaks, every inch of earth bears evidence of this fact."

"This is the most wonderful part I have seen yet," said Lew.

"You will be more than ever convinced of the truth of what you have said when you gaze on the mysterious and all-powerful agency at work doing all this, as you will when you look into Halemaumau of Kilauea."

Slowly but safely the boys moved up across the wide belt of satin rock and *pahoehoe* until they rode again under the overhanging foliage of a Hawaiian forest, where the wild apple-trees predominated and the convolvuli hung their snow-white drapery on everything, even to the rugged walls of the

deep, dark seams in the earth which frequently opened wherever they went. For the first time since Lew had been in Hawaii, the song of birds awoke the solitude, while the delightful plumage of the singers delighted his sight.

"I had rather see them than all your guava thickets and algaroba groves," declared Lew. "There is nothing so beautiful to me in all your wonderful forests, nor so sweet as their song. They put me in mind of home. I wonder what Aunt Mary is doing at this time."

It was a little past the noon hour when Ned pulled up under a wide-spreading ohia to eat the luncheon Mrs. Place had so thoughtfully provided them, and to allow the ponies to rest and eat of the rank grass which grew in bunches here and there.

"My pony seems to have become docile enough since that foolish fracas," said Lew.

"Found it didn't pay, I guess. He's too lazy to keep it up long. We are going to have a black storm before night," he added, scanning the heavens. "But if nothing happens to detain us we ought to reach Montjoy's before it sets in."

The prospect ahead caused them to make their respite short, and in less than half an hour they were again in the saddle and moving in the direction of the valley between the two mountains, Mauna Loa on their right and Kilauea on their left. As they progressed Lew had occasion to recall his thrilling adventure on Maui by the sight of a vast herd of wild cattle grazing on one of the clearings. They were a lean, forbidding-looking lot, and their leader was an old bull with one broken horn and a gaunt, fierce appearance. At sight of them he threw his thin head up and sniffed the air.

"I should hate to have the old scamp take it into his head to lead his troop in an attack on us," said Ned.

"I take it these old bulls are the worst creatures you have to meet."

"Oh, no, the wild boar, which is to be found on this island, is more to be dreaded than the worst stalker that ever led his legion on a lone traveller, though we know the bull is no mean enemy."

"Are these wild cattle never hunted?"

"Oh, yes. It may seem strange to you, but this very herd is probably owned by some one in Hilo, who may have ten thousand such animals running at large. They are shot for their hides by men who make it a business to shoot and skin them. Farther up on the mountains are many herds even wilder than these, and without owners. They, and these as well, are degenerate descendants of the cattle placed on the island by Vancouver."

Though he kept a pretty close watch of them, the old bull did not molest them, and five minutes later they were out of sight of him and his herd. They had now reached a belt of tree ferns, many of which grew to the height of twenty feet, with fronds varying from four to eight feet in length. Then these majestic plants were replaced by the sombre ohia, that seemed to flourish everywhere. Under their dark, matted tops it was so dusky that they progressed slowly for miles, until both began to feel that they had lost their way.

"Joel said nothing of this wide grove, and he was particular to mention every odd feature by which we were to be guided. It will be night before we emerge from this gloomy forest."

"If we emerge at all," added Lew, to whom it began to appear boundless.

At last, however, Ned, who was still in advance, announced that he could see the rim of the forest. Cheered by this, they

tried to urge the ponies into a faster gait. But neither whip, spur, nor tongue could make the obstinate and now jaded animals move at a more rapid pace.

By the time they had reached the border of the ohia wilderness it was dark in reality, night having fairly set in without moon or stars. A lurid spot in the far distance, marking the location of the "House of Fire," alone told them where they were. To add to their discomfiture, rain was beginning to fall.

"This open country is going to be worse than the ohia scrub," declared Ned, "for we are going to be bothered to keep the path, if indeed there is one. I must depend on the pony, and do you keep close to my heels."

Thus, with the rain soon pouring down in torrents, and enveloped in a darkness so dense that nothing could be distinguished, they plodded on, Ned trusting solely to his pony, and Lew's only guide the occasional clinking of the shoes of his companion's pony, as it struck with its foot a rock in its path. But the gloomy ride met with an abrupt end. Ned's pony suddenly stopped and refused to take another step.

"I don't know what the trouble is," called out Ned, "but I can't make the lazy creature budge an inch!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE SOLITARY MISSIONARY.

FINDING, after repeated efforts, that the pony continued to refuse to take another step, Ned dismounted and began to make a hasty examination of his surroundings. He moved cautiously in the dark, but he came near losing his life, and the startling exclamation left his lips:

"My gracious, Lew! I am on the brink of a pali! No wonder the pony would not go any farther. Another step would have sent him and me over the chasm. We can go no farther this way."

"What shall we do, — stay here until morning?" asked Lew, to whom such an alternative was to be dreaded in their rain-soaked condition. "I am going to move about a bit, back here," slipping from his seat as he spoke.

"Be careful," warned Ned. "There may be other palis."

At this moment Lew ran plump up against what seemed the side of a high rock, but, nothing daunted, he began to move along its wall, keeping his hand against it to guide him. In this way he advanced for several rods, when he found himself at its end.

"Where are you, Lew?" called out his companion. "Be careful how you wander off in this blinding darkness. A misstep might cost you your life."

"I see a light, Ned!" answered Lew, joyously.

"From old Kilauea."

"No; it is a home light. Some one lives near by. Turn back a few yards, Ned. There is a big rock on this side, but as soon as you get around this the light is in plain sight. It is only a short distance away."

Ned lost no time in obeying, and a few minutes later he stood beside his companion, with the ponies close by. Lew's joy was now shared by him, and he exclaimed:

"It must be Montjoy's hermitage. We will soon know."

Two minutes later they were standing before the entrance of an odd-looking structure with walls of lava block and roof thatched with lantana and grass. On the back side the roof came to the ground, so as to answer for a wall. Square openings of moderate size in the wall toward them answered for windows, while a larger aperture served as a place of entrance and exit. Within they could see a tall, gray-bearded man, with a decided stoop to his shoulders and a benevolent countenance, dividing his time between tending some dish he was stewing over a small fire and playing with a half-grown turkey. At the sound of Ned's voice his whole attitude changed from its merry carelessness to a look of seriousness.

"Who disturbs the peace of a lonely man at this hour?" he demanded, advancing to the doorway, the turkey trotting along at his feet.

"Lone wayfarers who have lost their way. If I mistake not, this is Father Montjoy?"

"I have never been ashamed to own that in my humble way. Get thee hence to thy resting-place, Turk, where thy sensible brothers and sisters are. Enter, strangers, and, with God's grace, partake of an old man's hospitality. It is not much I have to offer you, but such as it is you are entirely welcome to share with me."

"Please accept our thanks, good father; but we have horses with us which are hungry as well as tired."

"Turn them loose; they will not wander far. There is plenty of grass behind the hut. They will not mind the rain. Come in as soon as may be."

Ned and Lew quickly slipped the bridles from the heads of the ponies, and leaving them to seek, as if by instinct, the succulent grass covering the little valley a few rods away, they entered the humble abode of the solitary missionary.

"You look like honest youths," frankly declared the missionary, after a searching glance from his piercing eyes, which looked out from under shaggy brows. "Pray what errand has called you into this forsaken region at this time? No common motive, I'll warrant me. Why, you are as wet as drowned rats! I was not aware it had been raining so much."

"It has been a smart rain, good father, and so dark we had a difficult task to find your peaceful home."

"So it was to find me that you have come into this lonely spot?" he demanded, with evident surprise. "Pray what is your errand with me? Men seldom seek me nowadays, why should boys?"

"I did not mean just that," replied Ned, in confusion. "We were told of you, and, obliged to come this way, we sought you for counsel and assistance."

"Who spoke of me to you?"

"A man at Hilo, — Joel Place."

"So they speak of me at Hilo? But what can I, a poor old man, do for you?"

"We have not expected to put you to much trouble, good father. Ours is no common errand which has called us hither. But it is a long story to tell."

"Then keep it till a more fitting moment. Dry your

saturated garments, while I get you a sup. As you eat I will listen to what you have to say. Turk," turning to the fowl which persisted in flying upon his outstretched hand, "I positively declare that you must retire to your resting-place. You see your master has company."

"I never knew of a turkey keeping around so long after dark."

"Nature's rules are easily broken, my son; too easily, as many a poor mortal has learned to his cost."

The aged missionary soon began to busy himself in preparing something for the boys to eat. While he did so Ned and Lew had ample opportunity to look at their surroundings, while they dried their wet clothing. The home of Father Montjoy was of the plainest sort, there being no furniture which had not been made on the place. Cocoanut shells and calabashes made of leaves answered their purpose in place of more elaborate dishes. While they ate of the simple repast, Ned made their host acquainted with the object of their journey into the mountain fastness, their host making no comment until he had closed, when he said:

"A strange story, my son, and a sad one. I cannot judge of the wisdom of your course. I fear you have not fully considered the danger of your undertaking. What can two boys, alone and empty-handed, do in these savage regions?"

"Sometimes one or two can accomplish more than a dozen can, if they are careful how they go to work."

"Like the conceit of youth," he declared, shaking his head mournfully. "When I was young I thought I could reform the world; now I am old I see my folly. In all my seventy years' experience I do not remember of such a wild-goose chase as yours. However, rest may cool your warm blood. I believe the rain is slackening off."

NED TELLS HIS STORY TO THE LONE MISSIONARY.

Ned was not to be put off in this manner. It seemed to him the missionary knew more than he was willing to own.

"You do not believe any of the old pagan spirit remains, Father Montjoy?"

"It passes God's wisdom. He knows the poor native has had enough to answer for without the sins of the white man. Alas! theirs is an unhappy lot, but they will not long be held accountable to man or God."

"I think there are a few idolaters living in this vicinity," ventured Ned, hoping to draw the other out.

"Where?" he asked, showing more animation than he had before.

"I cannot tell just where, good father. I wish I could."

"It is not reasonable, my son. God has placed me here to watch over such, but he has not pointed the way," and, seeing he was about to relapse into silence, Ned inquired:

"You have been long in these parts, Father Montjoy?"

"Not long if measured by my work, my son. I came to these islands over half a century ago, a young man full of God's love and a will to do his work in the face of any opposition. In those days a trip to Hawaii meant something of time and hardships. I was two-thirds of a year in getting here. I left my boyhood home in the good old town of Headley, Massachusetts, which name I have not heard mentioned in all these years. I came around Cape Horn in one of the old-style sailing vessels built at Bath, Maine."

As the speaker paused here, Lew improved the opportunity to say:

"I have come recently from Headley, Mr. Montjoy. This makes me doubly glad to see you."

In a moment the gray head was lifted, and the missionary clasped Lew's hand, as he said, in a fervent tone:

"And me trebly glad to see you. Is it possible you are just from Headley? I have often wondered how the old town is looking now. Not many are living that I knew. You will pardon me if I prove inquisitive. You have awakened memories which have slept long years."

If anything had been wanted before to unloosen the good man's tongue, it had been found. Long and earnestly he talked with Lew and Ned, now that he knew of their nativity. There was a melancholy interest in the fact that his family had become extinct at home. During the conversation he touched briefly upon his experience in the land of his adoption.

"I began work in the northern part of this island," he began, "at a place where one of the heathen temples, or *heiaus* as the natives called them, was still standing in fairly good state of preservation. I remember of having been told how at its building a line of natives was stationed for fifteen miles, so that the stones with which the temple was erected could be passed from man to man to the place of work. When completed it was the largest place of worship on the seven islands, being some over three hundred feet in length. Some of the walls were standing a few years since, and I presume are left now. At the dedication many human lives were offered as a sacrifice to their pagan god. How many could not be told then, but the *lele* — scaffold where the bodies lay — remained as a grim relic of that fearful day. It was near this ill-fated spot that Kamehameha the Conqueror was born, and where a statue stands to keep his memory alive. I merely mention these facts to show how populous the people were in those years, where now but a handful remain.

"My labours were principally confined to Kauai, the

Garden Island, as it is called. A portion of this rugged island forms the most precipitous frontage to the sea of any of the Hawaiian group. On the northwest side it is bounded by a pali of such magnitude as to make a complete circuit of the island impossible by land. But among the stupendous walls are small fertile valleys, into which the natives had pushed their way by means of ladders and scaling ropes. It was enough to make one dizzy to be swung down one of those steep inclines a thousand feet in height by a slender cord. I will acknowledge that I did nothing but pray from the moment I risked my life under such circumstances until I was safely on my feet, at the top or bottom, as the case might be.

"But the people were kind-hearted and I went on with my work with a good grace. So numerous were the inhabitants that often a hundred would gather to hear the word of the true God. By holding my meetings from place to place I was able to preach to a goodly number. A native who lived with me always went with me on those trips, and when it was too difficult for me to attempt to cross some exceptionally high pali he would go ahead and arouse the people, when they would stand on the opposite bank and listen to my discourse. They were so good-natured that I learned to love them, and their soft-spoken alohas were music to my ears.

"But this soon began to change. The people, like all savages, proved very susceptible to contagious diseases and the vices of civilisation. The measles, brought here from California in 1848, alone claimed one in every ten. The smallpox, which came from California, too, five years later, took away many, in spite of all that could be done to prevent it. Thus disease after disease did its dreadful work, until the leprosy came as a legacy from China to add the most

horrible chapter to the history of the doomed race. Government has been too lax in its treatment of this malady. The rich have been often left to spread it, while only the poor have been taken to that hole equal to the place of the black death. I do not wonder that the poor victims dread to go there. The saddest spectacle I ever saw was at that lazaretto of living death on Molokai's lone shore. There is something demoniacal in the way the unfortunates meet their fate with a smile and their death-songs rendered more mournful under the shadow of a fate more awful than Dante ever dreamed of. Everywhere the result was the same. Captain Cook fixed the population of the native inhabitants at four hundred thousand; to-day they will not number thirty thousand. Then the islands were so densely populated that artificial means had to be adopted to support the people. Ponds were built for the raising of fish, and tracts were enclosed by stone walls on the mountainsides where families were compelled to raise more than they needed for their own consumption that they might help feed others. Now these centres of life and activity are scenes of solitude. Almost before I knew it, my whole parish was destroyed, a supreme silence reigning where so oft I had listened to the gentle greeting of that race I had learned to love. I had no other alternative than to leave the still valleys of Kauai.

"But forgive me for presenting such a pathetic picture, and of wearying you with a story which I need not have told, save that it leads to that of which I wish to speak. It explains, in part, why I am here. While the work of the missionaries was successful everywhere else, this region, remote from the accessible parts of the island, remained under the dark spell of the priesthood of Pele. Sacrifices were continued to be offered year after year. In 1824 the

Princess Kapiolani, upon accepting the teachings of Christ, resolved to save her deluded brethren by visiting them and boldly reproving them in their blind worship. Disobeying every rite which they had been taught to regard as sacred, she showed many of them by her own faith their error. Many were saved at once and others followed, but I firmly believe there are those left who secretly live in the darkness of those benighted days. Under the awful fires of the last of Hawaii's craters is the fitting place for the remnant of that ill-fated race to rally for the final battle. At any rate, I am here watching and waiting for the summons of the Lord to go to the rescue, and complete the grand work done by his servants."

"You believe in part what I said," declared Ned, who, with Lew, had listened to the missionary's awe-inspiring words in a profound silence.

"Ay, I have looked for this High Priest of Pele, whom I believe to be located somewhere in this vicinity, but my old limbs refuse to bear me very far from home. But this is the hour for my usual devotional exercises. If you do not care to join me, you will excuse me until they are over, I know. Then I will show you to your mats."

Ned and Lew were deeply affected by the simple service of the good man, as he knelt in the middle of the floor to pour out his love and gratitude to his Master. At the conclusion of his prayer, in which they were generously remembered, he invited them to enter a small apartment separated from the other by a sort of blanket made of grass and leaves. Within this was a pallet which looked clean if not as soft and roomy as the couches they had known at home.

"Do not let me disturb you if I am astir in the morning before you care to rise. Now I leave you in His care."

CHAPTER XXVII.

OALAU THE OUTCAST.

"WHAT a strange man he is," whispered Lew, as soon as they were alone. "Do you suppose he is just right in his mind?"

"Yes, except that being alone so long has made him uncommonly melancholy. I have heard of him, and what he has said of the natives agrees with other accounts. The Hawaiians owe very much to the missionaries."

Lew showed that he was well posted on this subject, for he quickly replied:

"From what I have read I know it, Ned. The first missionaries came here from Boston in 1819."

"Yes, and they landed at Kohala on this island. The king had already burned the idols to a considerable extent, torn down many of the temples and abolished the taboos. He readily granted the missionaries permission to remain one year, expecting they would go away at the end of that time. But they had made themselves so loved by the natives that they were permitted to stay indefinitely. Seven years after some Catholics tried to land here, but the king said one religion was sufficient, and would not let them come ashore. In 1837 they tried it with better success, and the Catholic Church has its followers here to-day.

"Some of the early missionaries had a pretty hard time of it. I have been told of the Rev. Titus Coan, who settled on

this island in 1835, that he took charge of the district on the lower coast, covering a territory a hundred miles in length. Horses in those days were considered only as wild animals, so he had to go on foot or by canoe. During his first year he made the complete circuit of Hawaii, a journey of three hundred miles, and converted over fifteen thousand persons. A missionary station in charge of a Mr. Lyman had been established at Hilo, and so great and widespread was the revival that the natives flocked thither from all parts of the island, until their grass and banana huts clustered as thick as they could stand for a mile back from the seashore. Hilo's population increased from one to ten thousand. This big camp-meeting continued for two years.

"At that time the High Priest of Pele reigning over this vicinity was a giant in stature, being nearly seven feet in height. The natives stood in great fear of him. Whenever a human victim was needed to appease the imaginary wrath of the goddess, he had only to point his finger toward some one, when the unfortunate victim was immediately strangled. He made it his business to supply offerings to Pele, while robbery was a pastime. He killed people for the mere pleasure of slaying, and no one dared to step on his shadow!

"Mr. Coan knew it would be a great help to his cause if he could convert this representative of heathen crime, so he set about trying to get the giant inside his thatched-roof church. One day he succeeded in arousing the pagan priest's curiosity by ringing some bells, and the old fellow went inside. Many of the others slipped out, but the missionary, fired with unusual zeal, so awoke the native's mind to the new revelation that he yielded to the persuasive power of the preacher. Rushing forward, he threw himself at Mr. Coan's feet, saying that he had been groping in darkness and that

he bowed to the true God. He was a constant attendant at the meeting for months, to be finally baptised in the Christian faith.

"As I said before, the natives owe very much to the missionaries. They found them without lands, homes, or family ties; they gave them homesteads, taught them to respect their rights, to love peace, to abolish the sacrifice of innocent lives, and to cherish the home ties. But you must be tired, and it is policy that we rest while we can."

Ned and Lew were astir early in the morning, to find that the storm had cleared away, leaving renewed freshness to the landscape.

The missionary was already preparing their breakfast, for which he had killed a fowl. He was very social, but urged them to abandon the quest, which he declared must be fruitless of good to any one. But nothing that he could say was likely to deter them from their purpose.

Their ponies were feeding quietly in sight of the hut, and the boys were surprised to find such a fertile valley so close at hand, while in the opposite direction the pali, where Ned had come so near losing his life, extended farther than they could see.

"Another step, Lew," said Ned, with a shudder, as he viewed the chasm, "and I should not have been here this morning."

"I know it, Ned, and I might have followed. I have been wondering how it is people live right under these awful fires so unconcerned, when it seems that any day might witness the destruction of the whole island. All this is grand, but terrible, if what I have read of should occur."

Lew was looking toward Mauna Loa, which was nearer to them than Kilauea, and which presented a more vivid

proof of the different stages of action than the smaller volcano. In fact, the latter looked like an offshoot of the mightiest if not the loftiest of Hawaiian volcanoes, whose fires are not extinguished, but banked for the present.

"Living in close contact with danger makes people forget their situation. I have heard it expressed, even by those living away from here, that there is really more danger of an outburst from Haleakala than from Mauna Loa, as it is hard to believe that the fires of the Temple of the Sun are really burned out. The outbreak of a volcano must be a terrifying spectacle.

"The worst one which has taken place within the history of man was in 1868, when Mauna Loa frightened the inhabitants so badly that many of them left the island. Earthquakes, so violent that they made the whole island rock like a cradle, preceded the overflow of the crater. Columns of steam, smoke, and bright red fire were sent high into the air, when it was seen that the whole southern slope of the peak had been torn asunder. Four rivers of lava and molten stone flowed from as many rents in its walls.

"Then, in the midst of the startling scene, the dome of the mountain appeared against the sky, clear of fire, smoke or steam, and the rivers were suddenly checked in their career. But instead of feeling relieved, the people were more alarmed. They knew this calm meant a breaking out in some unknown place. Not knowing where to look for the danger made it the more to be dreaded. The suspense lasted a couple of days, when the island shook worse than before, the ground cracked and opened in every direction, rocks were flung through the air great distances, trees were uprooted, and smaller mountains crushed, while the people and animals ran to and fro in terror.

"The mountain split, and a stream of stones and red lava rushed out for a distance of three miles in three minutes, and then disappeared into the earth. One whole village was buried with everybody in it. At the same time of the overflow the shore sank, and a wave estimated to be fifty feet in height dashed upon the coast, receding and returning until every building in that vicinity and nearly fifty people were engulfed. All now believed the day of judgment had come.

"Internal convulsions still continued for five days longer, when the pent-up powers found their liberty. The earth south of Hilo burst open with terrific force and noise. The overflow from the fiery mountain found vent through a fissure two miles in length, after having made its channel twenty miles underground. Red lava and rocks, some of them weighing many tons, were thrown into the air a thousand feet. One of the richest and prettiest plains of Hawaii was destroyed. This river of fire split into four, with an aggregate width of a mile and a half, and an average depth of twenty-five feet. The entire southern shore sank from four to six feet, destroying the hamlets located near the coast, and drowning a hundred persons. After this Mauna Loa became calm again, and Kilauea, which had been almost quiet during this outbreak, once more resumed its natural activity."

"What a scene it must have been!" said Lew. "Grand to him who witnessed it, but one he would not care to see repeated. There is Mr. Montjoy calling us to breakfast."

Half an hour later they stood at their host's door, ready for a departure into unknown dangers. He had promised to care for the ponies until they should be called for, and was now cautioning them against running headlong into peril.

"Remember, my sons, that your lives are worth saving. I do not wonder at your anxiety over the unknown fate of your loved ones, but wherever they are, His watchful eye is over them. If you must go, my prayers shall be constantly in your behalf."

Bidding the kind-hearted man good-bye, the boys started on their toilsome way, while he stood there, watching their receding figures until they were out of his sight.

The abode of the missionary stood on such an elevation as to command a fine view of the ocean. Formed of volcanic rock, the soil in this vicinity, except in the small valleys, was shallow, though patches of ferns and shrubs flourished here and there. Lew saw a profusion of wild strawberries, and a native berry called the *ohela*, which he found very palatable, grew plentifully. They had to be on a constant watch lest they should walk over some pali or into the wide, deep cracks in the earth, ferns and vines covering the brinks of these chasms so as to conceal them.

As they advanced, wild ducks frequently skurried across their path, while Lew was pleased to notice a greater number of birds than he had seen before. He was particularly pleased with the appearance of a small bird, with curved beak and plumage of black changing to green, and under each wing a slight cluster of yellow feathers, which made a beautiful sight when it flew.

"That is the *oo*," explained Ned, "a bird so rare that it is almost considered sacred. It feeds upon the honey of certain flowers, and is to be seen only on this island and Kauai. Kamehameha the Great thought it would be a fine idea to have his cloak of state made of the yellow feathers of the *oo* laid on a foundation of native hemp, manufactured from the fibre of the *olono*. So a tribute was levied upon

every subject for a few *oo* feathers, until there were enough to complete the royal robe. You may have some idea of its value, when you know that each feather is valued at half a dollar, and that it took four successive reigns of kings to complete it. This rare mantle is still kept and used on great occasions, and is valued at a million dollars."

An hour later they had entered a valley from which not only the view of the ocean but that of Mauna Loa was lost. The growth grew denser and the country wilder as they progressed at a slower and slower rate. About midday they had reached an uncommonly beautiful spot, where the forest was more scattering, and through which wound a small stream. All at once Ned stopped and motioned for Lew to do the same.

"Hist!" he whispered; "listen."

As both stood for a moment in silence strange sounds came to them; and yet these sounds would not have seemed strange in almost any other place. They were a close imitation of the barking of dogs. Was it possible to find a lot of dogs in that out-of-way corner? The barking continued, coming nearer until it was directly opposite them, and but a few yards away.

A thick hedge of vines completely concealed the scene in front, but parting the bushes noiselessly they gazed out upon an open space. Judge of their surprise at discovering a dozen Hawaiians moving along the sandy bank of the stream in single file. Lew looked for the dogs in vain. Still the low growl constantly broke on the silence of the lonely march. Lew soon noticed that the sounds were repeated every time the men stepped. The noise seemed to come from their bare heels.

In the course of a minute the dusky file, without dream-

ing that they had been seen, disappeared in the growth below, when the boys looked upon each other in wonder, though that wonder was born of different causes.

"Can it be we are on the right track at last?" asked Ned.

"What caused that noise, which seemed to come from their heels?" asked Lew.

"It was the sand. On the island of Kauai are what are called 'barking sands.' Every time one steps a sound like that we have just heard issues from the ground, and the sand here must be of the same nature. But only think, Lew, I believe we have found that heathen band at last."

"So do I," replied Lew, who was now as much on the alert as he. "Let's follow them."

"We must move with great caution. Come on."

As silently as two Indian scouts they followed in the direction taken by the Hawaiians, being careful to avoid the sandy way. This pursuit was shorter than they had expected, for they had not gone a dozen rods before they suddenly found themselves at the edge of a small Eden-like valley, cleared of all shrubbery. On one side of this sylvan retreat were a dozen grass huts, bearing every evidence of present occupancy.

The men they had been following were not to be seen, but moving sluggishly about or lying upon the grass were several native women and children. The sight of these, however, did not hold the attention of the boys as did the figure of an old, wizen-faced man sitting before one of the open huts, mumbling over some jargon, while his eyes rolled in every direction. Ned had scarcely gazed on this wild, antique-looking specimen of mankind, before he clutched Lew by the arm, whispering in his ear:

"*Oalau the Outcast!*"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE STRANGLERS.

LEW, from what he had been led to expect, had come to the same conclusion as Ned. It looked very reasonable to them that if Oalau was living they were gazing upon him. This specimen of a native Hawaiian witch doctor, a survival of ancient Polynesian superstition, which still exists on the island, certainly looked old enough to pass for the extreme age attributed to the High Priest of Pele. His hair and beard were of a yellowish white and his countenance a mass of wrinkles. He sat squat on the ground in front of his hut on a mat made of leaves, and continued to mumble over something to himself, as they watched him from their covert.

The men they had followed were now to be seen at the upper end of the clearing, while near by were a couple kneading poi. The women and children seemed bent only on their own amusement.

Away to the south and east stretched a vast swamp of tropical growth, reaching, it seemed, to the border of the burnt sands or desert on one side of Kilauea and the luxuriant grain-fields on the north. The background of this secluded spot was the foothills of Mauna Loa, the big mountain overtopping these in the distance.

"The old fellow is surely Oalau," whispered Ned, when they had taken a careful survey of him and his surroundings.

"Shall you speak to him?"

"I have been thinking what was best to do. If he should recognise me he would be put on his guard. If you should go to him alone the result might be the same."

"You think he is the High Priest of Pele referred to by Mr. Montjoy?"

"Yes; and that being the case he is at the bottom of all our troubles. I think it will be safer for us to act under this belief. I have never heard of this isolated village under Mauna Loa's very foot, and I do not believe Mr. Montjoy knew of it, though he has a vague idea there may be such a place. At any rate, we can be assured they are here for no good. They are a band of stranglers. If mother and Grace are in their hands I shudder for them."

"There is no sign of a place of sacrifice where their offerings might be made."

"They make their offerings at the crater of one of the mountains. If we knew which we should be better able to act. But look closer, Lew, to our left. Can't you see ruined walls through the thicket? I see what may have been the walls of a heathen temple. I am sure of it. This was once a larger settlement, and I will warrant you Oalau is not the first priest who has made it his headquarters. Perhaps it was here the giant strangler converted by Mr. Coan used to stay when he was gone on his visits to the mountains. It was a fortunate thing Joel sent us on this cross route."

"We should never have seen this settlement if we had not heard the barking sands."

"Very true. So well is it hidden that we should have passed it by without dreaming of its close proximity. On the other hand, had we placed a foot in those sands Oalau would

have been warned of our presence, and we can easily conjecture the sort of a reception we should have received."

"Look, Ned! some one has joined Oalau at his hut. He looks excited. What can have happened. Do you suppose we have been discovered?"

During the preceding dialogue the boys had kept a pretty close watch of the scene, but at brief intervals had allowed their eyes to wander off in other directions. In the moment of one of these lapses a newcomer had appeared before the old witch doctor, and began a conversation with him.

"I wish we could hear what they are saying. It may be they are talking secrets."

"Why can't we crawl along behind that thicket, and so get within hearing without being seen?" suggested Lew.

"We can and will try it."

As Ned concluded, he began to creep cautiously through the growth in the direction of the thicket pointed out by Lew, and which would bring them within hearing distance of Oalau's hut. Lew followed closely behind him, both moving with extreme care, knowing that the least disturbance would arouse the Hawaiians and make trouble for them.

It must have been something of great importance that the man, who seemed to be a messenger of ill tidings, was saying to Oalau, as the boys reached a position which enabled them to hear what was being said, though Lew could not understand a word. By the time the newcomer had finished his harangue the priest was on his feet, all the fire of his earlier years returning to his sunken eyes, while a perfect torrent of words flowed from his lips. His long, shrunken arm pointed toward Mauna Loa.

"This is worth all our pains," whispered Ned, who understood every word. "That young native has been telling

Oalau that a new eruption of the volcano is threatening them, and he says Pele is greatly angered at the delay in having an offering. Oalau has replied that the younger victim shall be sacrificed to-night. There are two more. The young girl referred to by the old priest must be Grace, and to-night — "

The messenger was speaking again, and Ned stopped in the midst of his speech to listen. He spoke briefly this time, when Oalau made reply in a lengthy outburst of language, every word of which was listened to with breathless interest by Ned, who said, at its conclusion :

" I was right. These are a body of stranglers, and Oalau is the chief of them. It seems they have not been successful in getting victims. The people are too well informed to allow them to go out as they used to and take their pick. They had three captives, two women and a boy. One of the women is young and very beautiful, the other is older. The boy has got away, and that is what has caused this rumpus. Oalau is furious, as you can see by his actions. Hark ! he is speaking again."

Ned was listening as earnestly as ever, and so was Lew, too, and though he could not tell what was being said, he was certain it was something of great importance to the speaker. When the old Hawaiian had ceased speaking, Ned explained :

" It is as I thought. One of the captives has managed to get away from his keepers, and Oalau orders that he be found at once. If he is not, the messenger will have to take his place, and all of those who have been concerned in the affair will be sacrificed. The offering is to be made to-night ! Only think, Lew, how near at hand — only a few hours off. I judge it is to be done at Mauna Loa, for he mentions that

mountain twice, and he referred to Lau as one of those to suffer if this runaway boy is not restored. Oalau commands the messenger to start immediately for the mountain. See, the conversation is over."

The messenger had turned away, with looks of relief that the ordeal was over, while Oalau stood gesticulating and uttering fierce speeches at empty space. The sight of this aged High Priest of Pele in his wrath was a thrilling spectacle, and the gaze of the boys for a brief while was fixed upon him. But they quickly realised that it was useless for them to remain there longer. The dialogue was at an end, so there was no more to be learned. Leaving the old pagan standing before his hut in his inexpressible rage at having lost one of his few victims for the offering in that horrible ceremony of which he was a grim reminder of darker days, Ned and Lew stole silently from their covert. As soon as they were at a safer distance, Ned whispered :

"The time in which we have to work is short."

"Which makes every moment precious," replied Lew. "What are your plans ? "

"I have been thinking while we were crawling here that this messenger will return to the place where the captives were kept to tell the others of his meeting with their chief."

"Unless he takes it into his head to run away and thus try to save his life."

"He won't dare to do that. No, he will seek Lau and the others first."

"See, he is starting toward the mountain, Ned. We must not lose sight of him."

CHAPTER XXIX.

INSIDE A VOLCANO.

AT that moment the Hawaiian's dusky figure was disappearing into the maze of tropical growth hedging in the little valley on the north. Any delay on their part might make it impossible to find the path he was about to pursue.

Ned, whom Lew acknowledged as leader, swiftly but silently moved toward the west side of the opening. It would be necessary for them to make a half circuit in the forest in order to reach the course taken by the messenger. In this passage they passed at the foot of a rounded tumulus of several feet in height, near which were the ruined walls of the ancient *heiau* or heathen temple, which once had been the scene of many sacrifices to the Hawaiian gods and goddesses. Lew merely glanced at the horrible reminder of paganism as they hurriedly passed through the sacred grove, but he could not help wondering how many times the isolated spot had echoed to the pitiful cries of the doomed ones offered as a blind pacification to the goddess Pele in her awful wrath.

Here the growth was sparse enough to allow them rapid transit, but beyond it became so dense that they were obliged to pick their way along more slowly. Ned, in his anxiety lest they should lose their guide, parted the matted vines with clutches regardless of the pain to him. Lew, following

close at his heels, thus found it easier to get along. A few minutes of this rough advance brought them into line with the direction taken by the Hawaiian.

"We must look sharp for his path or we shall not find it," whispered Ned. "Unless I am mistaken we shall find it a concealed way, though there must be of necessity some parting in this wilderness of foliage."

Ned penetrated a rod farther into the depths of the wilderness, when he stopped and pointed to the ground. Seeing no explanation to this suggestion, Lew looked inquiringly at his companion.

"The leaves and branches all point in one direction — toward the mountain," whispered Ned.

"But no man could have walked through this thicket," declared Lew, as he viewed the mass of *ie-ie* vines loaded with their scarlet cones.

"Neither did our guide — he crawled!" and down flat upon the ground dropped Ned, to begin his tedious passage where his quick eye had detected such a slight clue of the transit of the Hawaiian. Lew imitated his example in silence, and for five minutes they progressed in this silent, laborious manner. At the end of that time they had reached a section where it was possible for them to move in an upright position. So far they had seen nothing of the Hawaiian they were supposed to be following, but Ned was so certain they were taking the right course that they kept on without any misgivings.

"It leads toward the mountain," he said, "and there can be no other path. See, there is a footprint in the dust. I am sure we are right."

It would not only be tedious but painful to follow them step by step through that long afternoon's journey toward

the mountain. Each step carried them higher into the upward realm, though neither realised the ascent they had made until at last Ned stopped, saying, as he pointed ahead:

"Look there, Lew! You have heard of Pele hair, and now you can see it."

They had paused in a clearing strewn with lava blocks and black earth. Lew had seen already long, shining threads, which looked like slender lines of silver, rising and floating on the air, to be caught up by breeze and carried away until they faded on the view.

"They are threads of glassy lava sent from the pit by the powers at work below. The natives gave it the name of Pele hair, and when it was to be seen, as it often is blown all over Hawaii, they believed the goddess who dwelt in the fiery home was angry over something which they had done, and was tearing her hair, and pulling it out by the handful! Then there was nothing for them to do but to offer her a sacrifice of some poor victim, who was at once strangled and thrown into the mouth of the crater. I did not think we were climbing so high, for we can look down on Kilauea. As that looks from here it is really but a lateral orifice of Mauna Loa, and which must be small, though eight miles in circumference, to the main outlet of this mountain."

The path of the Hawaiians to the mountain for the last half-hour had been easily followed, as if they had made no attempt to conceal it; in fact, that would have been no easy matter for them along that barren earth. From this point the track was more indistinctly traced by Ned, who led the way under overhanging tufts of tara grass, stunted ohias, and diminutive koa-trees. These last were among the strangest specimens of Hawaiian forestry Lew had seen. A large percentage of these trees were dead, while these and the living

ones were enveloped in a white lichen that made the whole look like a wood touched with frost. The koa enjoys the distinction of bearing two distinct species of leaves on the same twig, an exact protype of the willow leaf and the catalfa.

They had now nearly reached the limit of vegetation, and a short distance above them grew only the white lichen and tufts of withered grass. Beyond for thousands of feet the vast uplands of pahoehoe, and lava in all its forms, from phonolite to pumice-stone, — the cooled froth of the volcano, — tossed and twisted into an infinite variety of shapes, were to be seen as far as the eye could reach, and how much farther they had no way of knowing. Something of the vastness of this sterile region may be understood when it is considered that the whole southern part of Hawaii is comprised in the slope of this gigantic mountain, which is a hundred and eighty miles in circumference and three miles in height. The state of Rhode Island might be embraced in this limit and have a good margin to spare. This stupendous tract, the prey of the mightiest forces on and in the earth, a little above midway is such a wild waste of desert as puts to naught the perils of Sahara.

Ned's mention of the crater in speaking of Pele hair had not been understood by Lew, who had heard nothing of the rumbling and roaring he was expecting in the vicinity of a volcano, nor were there smoke wreaths circling in the thin air. He saw nothing save the desolate wilderness without trees, and the sun hanging like a fiery ball over the dreary summit.

No doubt Ned, who knew that Kilauea was not to be seen or hinted of until one beheld it at his feet, had expected as much here, for he paused with apparent unconcern as they

"'BEHOLD THE ABODE OF QUEEN PELE.'"

descended around a huge lava wall, to abruptly come upon the grandest sight man ever gazed upon.

"Behold the abode of Queen Pele!" announced Ned, somewhat grandiloquently, as he pointed to the depths yawning below and beyond them.

For the first time Lew looked upon the volcanic fires of nature, and he was awed by the sight, though they were still half a mile away. From out of the abyss played a fountain of pure, yellow fire, not like the gory gleam, as he had been told, Kilauea sent forth, but jets of gold shooting from one to two hundred feet into the sulphurous air. These heights seemed the rule, but once, as they watched it, a spray shot upward for more than five hundred feet, making the grandest display of fireworks imaginable. On every hand, outside of this chaotic spot, were 'rents, seams, and bottomless ravines, along the rims of which clung and blossomed the pink and white convolvuli. The floor of this vast amphitheatre, with these gaps, and often piled with huge blocks and boulders of congealed lava, was composed of the pahoehoe or satin rock flow.

Ned, who had seen Kilauea several times, felt less interest in this weird scene than his companion, and no sooner had they turned the angle in their pathway than he looked for some sign of the Hawaiian, who, unknown to himself, had been their guide. He was just in season to see the native disappear around another turn in the winding track ahead.

"We are on the right course," he thought, and he was about to say as much to his friend, when Lew exclaimed, in a low tone:

"I thought I heard footsteps behind us!"

Without waiting for Ned's reply he darted back to the

edge of the lava block, when he saw, to his amazement, half a dozen Hawaiians approaching at a rapid pace.

"We are followed, Ned!" he exclaimed.

"Then it won't do for us to stand here. To turn back means to lose all we have gained. Shall we go ahead?"

"Yes, and every moment counts now."

"Look out how and where you step, for a single misstep will cost you your life, Lew."

The path, with a rock-wall on one hand growing higher as they advanced and a sheer precipice of unknown depth on the other, was barely wide enough for a person to make a passage into the realms of the fiery regions below. Following such a dizzy way it was no easy matter to look back, and as there had been no outcry when they turned the second corner, which would conceal them from their pursuers, they knew they had not yet been seen.

The narrow foundation beneath their feet grew warmer as they kept on, while the internal fires in the distance became brighter. A murmur increased in volume as they advanced, until this had become a deep rumbling, which in turn was succeeded by a roar that reminded Lew of the surf beating on Windward Hawaii. The pool of fire was growing larger, and the dark walls more ridgy and seamy as they progressed.

Ned had seen nothing more of the Hawaiian ahead, but as there had been no chance for him to turn aside, he knew very well he must be still in advance. The turns in the path came oftener, and the way was rougher, while it descended at a steeper angle.

"Do not be afraid," said Ned. "If you should fall, be careful how you catch hold of the lava, for it will cut like glass. Can you hear those following us?"

"No. Do not be alarmed for me, Ned. I can go a little faster if you wish."

Ned did not feel like doing that, and along such a path they moved for more than a quarter of a mile, without any change except that the furnace of the everlasting fires was nearer, clearer, hotter, deadlier, a sight that under less exciting circumstances must have held them spellbound. As it was they merely glanced, ever and anon, at the fascinating yet terrible spectacle.

Finally, after having made one of its abrupt turns, the path widened into a way several rods in width, and spanning the chasm reached to the floor beyond. Without thinking of any greater danger than he had been risking all of the time, Ned hurried across this wide bridge, but he had not gone half of the distance across before he felt it sinking! Too late to turn back, he shouted to Lew to look out, and he ran at the top of his speed toward the more solid rock. Cracking and quivering beneath his weight, as he reached the last part of this span it went down into the gulf with a terrific crash, just as he had gained good foothold on the solid bed. Overcome with the shock, and believing Lew had been carried into the bottomless abyss, he sank as weak as a child on the rock.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE TEMPLE AT THE BURNING LAKE.

IT must have required extraordinary nerve to have withstood the shock Ned Merriweather received when he sank upon the very brink of the rock, and that black gap behind him where a moment before he had crossed. A sharp cry from Lew caused him to rouse up, and he saw to his great joy that his friend had escaped. But Lew's escape had been more narrow than his, for the concussion had thrown him flat upon the edge of the opposite brink of the quivering archway. A glance from Ned showed that this part of the natural bridge had been partially torn from the pali beyond, and was sinking into the black depths below. The gulf between him and Ned was already more than a dozen feet, and growing wider each moment. To attempt to return to the pathway would be fatal.

"Quick, Lew! leap for your life — *leap!*" he cried. "'Tis your only chance."

Lew was already on his feet, and looking over the widening chasm toward his despairing friend, he realised something of his peril. A crash rang in his ears, and he felt the whole structure going down, as with blanched cheeks and firm-set lips he sprang out over the yawning abyss.

It was a desperate leap for life, and Ned held his breath as he saw the ponderous shelf of rock disappear with a crash,

and Lew's half-doubled form suspended in mid-air. Then a glad cry left his lips as his friend dropped in a heap at his side.

"Saved!" exclaimed Ned, as soon as he had recovered sufficiently to speak. "Look up, Lew! it is over."

But the strain had been too great for Lew to recover at once, and it seemed a long time to his companion before he slowly opened his eyes. During the interval their pursuers appeared on the opposite side, expressing their astonishment at what had taken place in loud cries. Their passage now cut off, they would be forced to return the way they had come. Ned, as he scanned the fifty feet of open space checking the pursuit of their enemies, felt a thrill of greater relief over their providential escape, though he was mindful that perils equally as great might environ them as prisoners in the crater.

"Where am I, Ned?" asked Lew. "Oh, I understand it all, but I thought I should not reach you when I felt that rock falling under me. You will forgive me for my weakness, Ned, but I cannot stand alone yet."

"Forgive you, Lew? I feel like hugging you. What a leap that was, and what an escape we have had! I tremble now. Let me see if I cannot help you to your feet. There is no turning back now, and we must move on as soon as we can. I have seen nothing of that messenger since he left that narrow path, but that does not matter."

"What if we had been on that part of the rock which went down first, Ned? And see, there are the Hawaiians on the other side."

"Yes, but we are safe from them. I think I must have kept too near the edge in my haste to cross, and that part of it breaking down started the rest. But it could not have

been safe at any place. If you feel like it we will go ahead."

With a last look at the place which they were not likely to forget, the boys walked silently across the lava floor, which reminded Lew of the concrete walks of his native town, only at places the lava blocks were not laid level, but looked as if thrown down in haphazard manner. If at first this plain had looked so it reached far into the interior, they were soon undeceived. A place was reached where a descent by steps was made into the lower chamber of the crater.

Here they stopped to take a hurried survey of their surroundings, and decide which way to turn. On either hand the uneven flooring extended farther than they could see. In front was the hissing, seething lake of fire, tossing on its waving surface molten globes of liquid stone and lava, or sending high into the air huge jets of silvery flame. Little wonder they were awed into silence and inactivity. So near to them its heat and glare pained their eyes, was a fiery sea whose tide was controlled by powers which had never been at rest since the beginning. To Lew, who had been a close student of nature, it seemed as if the work of creation, begun so many millions of years ago, was here still in progress. As he stood there he realised as he had never before the meaning of God's word, and the wondrous task of building a world.

Ned, who had more on his mind and who had seen such sights before, felt less interest in the sublime spectacle, though he paused in his survey of his surroundings, to say:

"You see now the abode of the fire goddess, Pele. In many respects she was the most important deity in Hawaiian mythology, and with her six sisters and a brother was believed to hold her court in the fiery chasms underneath

the crater. Mauna Loa is rich in its legends of this mythical being whom the Hawaiians both loved and feared. I remember one Mauve used to tell with great solemnity, how many years ago this goddess fell in love with a prince ruling over this district, and who was noted for his skill in athletic sports, especially in *holua*, the national game. This consisted in coasting the highest and steepest hills on the *papa*, the long, slim sled such as you saw at Hilo. At one of these contests, when the prince had won an easy victory over his competitors, he was surprised to have a young and beautiful maid step from the crowd of spectators, and challenge him to race with her. She had no sled, but the prince ordered one to be given her, so that she might be allowed a trial. The strange girl blundered at the outset and overset her sled, so that, notwithstanding the skill with which she rode after getting started, she lost the race. The spectators jeered and the prince laughed at her, while cheers were given for him.

"Nothing daunted, she asked for another trial upon regaining the top of the hill. The prince tossed his head contemptuously, and throwing himself upon his *papa* flew down the descending course alone. When near the bottom of the hill, a loud confusion behind him caused him to look back, and he beheld a sight which carried terror to his heart. Rushing after him was a broad stream of molten lava, bearing on its crest the goddess Pele, no longer in disguise of a maid. The spectators had been engulfed by the fiery torrent, and with wild shouts he fled for the sea. Fleet of foot, he succeeded in reaching the water, and springing into his canoe he paddled away for life. Pele followed so closely that he was burned by her hot breath. Finding that he was going to escape, for of course she could not live in the water,

she flung handfuls of hot stones toward him. In the midst of the hissing water and steaming air he went under to rise no more. In proof of this the Hawaiians point to the long, smooth track of satin rock where Pele pursued the prince down the Ala Holua, and to a prodigious pile of rocks off the seacoast.

"But if you have seen enough of Mauna Loa's furnace, we will continue our explorations, though it is like hunting for a needle in the dark. I think we had better search on our right first."

A distant grumbling had begun while Ned was speaking, and as they started away from the spot a loud report rang through the subterranean region with startling detonations, followed by a prolonged crash, as if a part of the crater lining had fallen away. A wilder surge of the fiery seas succeeded, lurid fountains hissed and roared high in the air, gigantic boulders were tossed and whirled on the surface, while a wave of red-hot lava overflowed the floor to within a few feet of them. Though this overflow subsided as quickly as it had come, boiling springs and exploding fields of lava rose and fell in countless profusion on the stormy surface of the volcano.

For a brief time the boys stood dazed and terrified by the sublime scene, and then Ned resumed his advance, closely followed by Lew. The floor of this strange place, strewn with frozen stones, trembled as they passed swiftly along. Their course for a time was in nearly a semicircle, so they did not get any farther from the rim of the crater, while on the other side they were overhung by the dark roof of this internal chamber, seamed by many an earthquake.

As they kept on, the room began to widen and reach farther under the roof, until they found themselves following

a broad passage, leading, as it seemed, into the very heart of the earth. This wild retreat, which otherwise would have been as dark as Erebus, was lighted by the volcanic fires to more than midday brilliancy. On either hand, as they advanced, dark fissures and caverns opened at frequent intervals.

They were passing one of these, when the sound of footsteps warned them of the approach of some one. Knowing they were not likely to meet any but enemies there, Ned whispered:

"Into the passage, quick!" and the next moment they were peering out from a safe covert to watch for the newcomer. A minute later a dusky figure flitted across the scene like a shadow and was gone.

"Lau!" exclaimed Ned. "We must follow him."

Fortunately they had chosen the darker or shadow side of the wide chamber, and by keeping close to the wall they managed to follow the unsuspecting native without attracting his attention.

A little farther on the underground chamber broadened into an extensive amphitheatre, cut in twain by a wide fissure in the floor, up through which escaped the sulphurous gases and lava fires of the volcano. In the seams of the rock that bush held sacred by the Hawaiian, the *ohelo*, loaded with its ripened berries, found a precarious existence. Overhead the stars shone with unwonted brightness, showing that here the roof was broken away.

Lew was interrupted in the midst of his observations by a grip on his arm from Ned, who pointed with his other hand in the direction of the crater, exclaiming:

"A *heiau!* See the cone-like walls built of lava blocks. Underneath that sort of portico is the *lele*, where the vic-

tims to be offered are placed before the sacrifice. Notice the awe with which Lau approaches the place. Now he retreats! Hark! the volcano is moving again."

As Ned spoke, a crash shook the place until the rock-walls were threatened to be torn down. The shock was followed by a tremendous thundering in the direction of the crater. The outbreak was so furious that Lau fled from the temple in terror.

"He will be back as soon as the violence is spent, and we can do no better than to wait here. I judge they are getting ready for the sacrifice to Pele. And to think that Grace and mother are among those victims! I am thankful, Lew, I am here to save them or to die with them."

"And that I am with you, Ned, to do all I can for your sake and theirs. We ought to be good for any dozen of them, or a score for that matter, unless I have underrated their fighting qualities."

Before Ned could reply to this generous speech, the sounds of many footsteps reached their ears, and they drew back into the deeper shadows. As they waited and listened there came slowly into sight the most weird procession they had ever gazed upon, and, as it drew nearer, they realised it was the train of the pagan priest and his human offerings to the goddess Pele.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A HALF-MILE SLIDE.

FOREMOST of the approaching party was Lau, bearing in his hand the graven image he had stolen from the home of the Merriweathers.

Close behind Lau followed, with trembling limbs which almost refused to bear his weight, the High Priest of Pele, Oalau the Outcast. The boys were lost in wonder to know how he could be there, when they had last seen him many miles from there, and separated by a wilderness that had taken them the afternoon to traverse. But notice and thought of him passed quickly, as they looked anxiously for those whom they had come to save from a horrible fate.

Behind the pagan priest walked two and two a dozen natives, escorting in their midst a single female, the beautiful offering of this heathen band to Pele.

"It is Grace!" exclaimed Ned, and had it not been for Lew, he would have rushed out and risked all in a bold attack on the Hawaiians.

"Wait a minute, Ned," admonished Lew. "We will act in good season. Do you see anything of your mother?"

"No; do you suppose they have murdered her?"

A deep rumbling broke in upon the other sounds of the crater, and another crash more terrific than that heard a few minutes before made it seem for awhile that the entire sub-

terranean world was rent in pieces. The mountain itself fairly reeled and shook to its base. A sullen roar, which lasted for several minutes, followed the report.

For the second time Lau was so frightened that he beat a hasty retreat.

Oalau shook his wrinkled arm, and shouted some unintelligible cry, which had no effect on his bewildered followers, who turned and fled on the heels of Lau, dragging the screaming captive in their midst.

This was more than Ned could bear. Regardless of the rolling thunder and the quaking earth, he sprang forward, crying:

"Help me, Lew! We must save her."

Instead of keeping down the centre of the chamber, the Hawaiians fled toward one of the inner recesses, and thither Ned ran.

Lew was close behind him, when all at once, with a sharp cry, Ned threw up his hands and disappeared into the black space. Realising that something extraordinary had happened to his companion, Lew tried to check his advance, but he was too late. The rocky floor seemed to collapse, — drop and break away! Nearly buried in a mass of fine sand, he was carried downward at a frightful rapidity. In vain he threw out his hands to catch at something to stop him, for they found only empty space.

After the first stage of his fall he moved downward more slowly, so that he became perfectly conscious of his descent. He appeared to be sinking into a quicksand, though he was carried onward without being covered deeper than to his waist. He was able to keep on his feet, but he was enveloped in darkness, and being carried, as it seemed to him, deeper and deeper into the earth. Where such a strange

"'HELP ME, LEW! WE MUST SAVE HER.'"

journey would end was beyond his wildest speculation. When he had recovered his self-possession somewhat, he called aloud the name of Ned. His joy may be imagined, when up from below him came the faint reply:

"Here I am, Lew! Have you stopped yourself?"

"No; I cannot do it. A power I cannot resist is bearing me down, I know not where. How is it with you?"

"The same. I seem to be moving down an inclined plane, buried to my waist in sand. I cannot get out, and cannot stop myself from sliding along, though I am going slower than I was."

"It is just so with me, Ned. How dark it is here. I cannot see my hand before me. It would not be so terrible if I only knew where I was going."

"Do you know what Oalau's men did with Grace, Lew?"

"No more than that they disappeared into one of those side passages at the same time you went out of sight into this place."

"Poor Grace, and we were so near! What will become of her now?"

"Let us hope no harm, Ned. Hark, the volcano is still breaking out. I can feel the foundation under me shake."

Ned made no direct reply to this, and Lew knew he was thinking of his sister and her unhappy fate. In that strange manner, drifting into dangers of which they had no way of foretelling, shouting occasionally back and forth to each other, the boys continued to descend, until they felt certain they had gone half a mile. As far as they were able to tell, there was nothing but the darkness and the sand about them, no top, no bottom, no side, no end, nothing but the creeping particles which sent a mawkish sensation through their systems. Still they held up with great fortitude, until

the suspense was broken by a glad shout from Ned, whom it must be understood was ahead of his companion :

" Hurrah, Lew ! I see a streak of light ahead. We are coming out into the world, after all ! Have courage ! "

Lew soon saw a gleam of light, and in a short time he had reached the outlet to the singular way. Ned had gathered himself up and was brushing a thick coating of dust from his clothes. Clinging to him from head to foot, this coating made him look like a snow man, only the snow in this case was inky black. As Ned looked so did Lew when he had gained his feet, and began to free himself of the clinging dust.

Neither had been hurt by their long descent, and they stared upon each other in amazement.

" Seems as if we had been shot down a long flume," declared Ned. " I can give no clear account of what happened to me in the volcano. My feet seemed to be suddenly taken from under me, and the sensation of falling succeeded. What shall we do now, Lew ? It is impossible for us to get back to the volcano by the way we have been forced to come here. It looks so we have entered one of the numerous gorges or fissures which are so common in Hawaii. See, the walls are more than a hundred feet high, perpendicular, and as smooth as a pahoehoe block. Where the exit is, if that can be reached, is more than I can tell. This is a sorry situation for us, Lew."

Still standing in the black lava dust which had oozed down from the dark opening behind them, Lew saw that they were indeed in a narrow ravine, with such walls as Ned had described. Overhead the stars looked down through the fringes of bushes growing on the rims of the gorge.

" We must find the outlet if there is one. It may be an easy matter to get out, after all, if we only find the right place."

"We will hope so; and the sooner we prove the matter the better. We can do no good by remaining here."

Without further delay they started on their work of investigation, obliged to go slowly on account of the uneven surface of the defile. They were scrambling over a big lava block, which completely choked the passage to the height of ten feet, when the sound of footsteps was heard.

"I thought I heard some one speak," said Lew. "There is some one ahead and he is coming this way! Is he friend or foe?"

A moment later a boy of Hawaiian birth came into sight. Evidently he had not dreamed of their close proximity, for he stopped with a look of fright on his countenance at sight of them, and he was about to flee, when Ned stopped his flight by saying:

"We are friends. Are you alone?"

"Aloha!" greeted the young native, softly. "Nuhau alone. He 'fraid you part of stranglers."

Both parties disarmed of fears, now they met each other half-way, a smile on the full lips of Nuhau as Ned and Lew clasped his hands. This young Hawaiian was a comely youth, and if possessing a dark skin, his jet-black hair was of a silken texture, he had flashing black eyes and long lashes, while the thick lips were relieved by teeth of perfect form and dazzling whiteness, his whole countenance permeated with amiability, generosity, and cheerfulness. Our boys felt drawn toward him at once.

They soon learned that he was the escaped captive over which Oalau had raved. He had come down the same mysterious avenue which Ned and Lew had involuntarily followed. He had sought escape by that way, rather than to be an offering to Pele, in whom he had no faith. He

had seen Ned's mother and sister, and assured him that they had met with no harm up to that day. Captives, he declared, were generally safe from harm until the sacrifice should be made. They were looked upon as sacred beings belonging to the angry goddess. But Nuhau had an announcement to make which was more hopeless. He had followed the gorge about a mile, to find his progress there stopped by a solid wall, the same as on the sides. Nowhere had he found a place that he could scale, so he had given up all thoughts of escape, and, with true Hawaiian fortitude, had resigned himself to die of starvation.

"Let us go down there," suggested Ned. "Nothing is gained by remaining inactive, and we may find a place of escape which Nuhau did not find."

The others readily agreeing, the three advanced along the ravine, making careful examinations as they went; but the walls everywhere proved too smooth and steep for them to find any hope of scaling, until they reached the cross wall described by Nuhau.

"This is as high and steep as the others," acknowledged Ned. "It looks so Nuhau was right, and that we must die here."

"If we should shout all together for help, would any one be likely to hear us?" asked Lew.

"Not unless it was one of Oalau's stranglers. While we are dying here what will become of Grace?"

For the first time since they had left Oahu, Ned showed feelings of despair. Lew had no comforting word now, while Nuhau stood silently looking on, with the grim resignation on his countenance of one who believes he is meeting a fate for which there is no help.

CHAPTER XXXII.

WHEN MAUNA LOA WAKES UP.

"HARK ye, Vancouver! Mauna Loa is waking up!" It is the evening following the scenes last described, when we left Ned and Lew in the prison-like ravine on the mountainside. But the spot is several miles from that lonely place, and the speaker is no one we have ever met before. He is a tall, gaunt man, sitting doubled up on a box under the long veranda of a tumble-down shanty, standing at the edge of a barren strip of land, surrounded by a wilderness of stunted scrub trees. He was alone, except for a yellow dog crouching and whining at his feet, to which he had addressed his brief speech.

He was a sort of hermit by the name of Monckton, who kept here a kind of half-way house on the old trail to Kilauea. Slow to think and sluggish of action, it must have been something of uncommon appearance for him to have broken forth in the words he had just uttered. The dog had been acting strangely for half an hour. There was a reason for all this, and such a reason!

A moment before a crash which had shaken the country far around and threatened to topple over his humble abode had been dropped from old Mauna Loa like a thunderbolt from a clear sky. This alarm was quickly followed by a storm of fire and molten débris hurled high into the dark space of night. All the afternoon the volcano had been

rumbling and grumbling, while occasionally flashes of light had shot upward from one of the cones on its southern and eastern side. Having lived all his life amid volcanic disturbances, the hermit had given no heed to this freak of the staid old mountain until now. As the thunder died away in the interior of the earth, shading his eyes so as to protect them from the glare of the fires more than ten miles away, he watched jet after jet of molten mass thrown upward with spiteful force, to break into a thousand fiery stars and dart away into regions of darkness. No sooner had this spectacle begun to subside than another roar, more terrible than the first, followed. The outburst succeeding outdid the volcano's previous effort both in volume and vividness.

So absorbed was Monckton in this grand but awe-inspiring sight, that he did not notice the approach of a two-horse team driven into the yard at a furious pace, until one of the occupants of the square-bodied wagon shouted in his ear:

"Hilloa, Monckton! Seen any strangers this way?"

"That you, Joel?" asked the hermit, in the same loud tone, for the noise and pounding of the volcano made it imperative to shout in order to be heard.

"Yes, it's me, Joel Place, and I have John Merriweather of Oahu with me. We are looking for a couple of boys who came up this way two days ago."

"Seen no boys. Old Mauna Loa is having some fun poking up his fires. Guess the old man has had some trouble with his housekeeper, Queen Pele, and she is giving him particular fits. Gee—"

Joel Place did not allow him to finish his soliloquy, for the planter was labouring under great excitement.

"Have you seen no one this way, Monckton? Set your dull wits to work. It is a matter of several lives."

"Guess you will think so before this show is over," replied the imperturbable hermit.

"Any word of them?" called out the man from the wagon, who was none other than Ned's father, who had recovered sufficiently from his injuries to come to Hawaii, find Joel Place, and get the planter to drive to this desert station as the most available place to get on track of the boys.

"Not a word, John," replied Mr. Place. "Of course — but who are these coming?"

At that moment three figures came out of the dense darkness and approached the place at a smart pace.

"Good Lord!" fairly gasped Mr. Place, "one of them is Ned!"

Sure enough, the foremost of the trio was Ned, while close beside him came Lew, and behind both followed Nuhau, the young Hawaiian.

"Ned, my son!" cried Mr. Merriweather, joyously. "This seems like an act of Providence. Have you found them, Ned?"

As great as was the surprise, Ned had recognised his father, and he threw his arms about his neck in unbounded joy, though it was not a situation to allow sentiment to hold sway long. The outbursts of the volcano were more frequent and violent each moment.

"Alas, father! we have accomplished nothing. I have seen Grace, but where she and mother are now I cannot tell, except that they are somewhere on the mountain. Before this I fear they have been killed."

"This is terrible! Can nothing be done? I am helpless to assist you, but Joel and I came here as he thought this the most likely place to find you. What is it now, Joel?"

"Here comes another fugitive, as I judge, from the mountain. If he be white or black is more than I can tell; he is covered with cinders."

"It is Lau!" cried Ned, with a feeling akin to joy at sight of the Hawaiian, who had proved himself anything but faithful to his former friends. No doubt he had been attracted to this place, as the boys had been, by Monckton's light. He was panting for breath, and showed that he was greatly frightened. Upon seeing Ned in the little group, he stopped and would have turned back, had not our hero called to him:

"Have you come from the crater, Lau?"

"No — no!"

"You have come from the mountain, anyway. I saw you at the crater yesterday. Where are mother and Grace?"

"Dead — all killed!" he groaned, and again tried to get away.

But Ned was swiftly beside him, and, seizing him in a frenzy by the arm, he cried, wildly:

"Tell me the truth, Lau. How did they die?"

The roar of the distant mountain made it impossible for the startled Hawaiian to make himself heard for awhile, when, as the rumbling abated, he exclaimed:

"You kill poor Lau?"

Understanding better than before the cause of his hesitation, Ned quickly replied:

"No, Lau; whatever has happened, we will not harm you if you tell us the truth. Mind you, tell us all you know."

"Lau know very little."

"But you know that mother and Grace are dead?"

"I s'pect they are."

What a relief that reply, indefinite as it was, proved to the little knot of listeners.

"Then you are not sure they have been killed, Lau? Be careful what you say. I was at the crater yesterday, and know that they were there. If you — "

Another earthquake shock drowned his speech, and so great was the effect that they were all nearly thrown upon the ground. Lau, in abject terror, sank prostrate on the earth. Mauna Loa seemed to have been torn asunder from foundation to top. A pillar of fire shot up from the volcanic head, side by side with which rose a column of smoke whose intense darkness was rendered doubly black by flashes of blood-red lightning, which in streaks and sheets played in fantastic shapes over the mountainside. These were followed by a continuous shower of fiery balls, hailstones of enormous size and lava sands falling like rain.

Even the imperturbable Monckton trembled and retreated into his hut. The others were very much alarmed, as they had reason to be. But Ned soon resumed his questions of Lau.

"Where are they now?"

"In the mountain."

"Do you mean at the crater?"

"No."

How provoking were these replies! In his excitement Ned shook the Hawaiian and shouted in his ear:

"Tell me where they are without more delay. Your life depends on your promptness."

"They are at Oalau's village under Mauna Loa," answered the thoroughly frightened Hawaiian.

"How came they there, when they were at the crater yesterday?"

"Men got scared and ran away. They took captives down Oalau's secret path to the sacred grove, where they are to be offered to Pele. Oalau's town all buried up and all dead now."

Lau evidently spoke what he believed to be the truth, and the others could not help thinking that he was more than likely to be right.

"God have mercy on my poor wife and child!" moaned Mr. Merriweather, in despair.

"We must go to their rescue," said the more hopeful Ned. "We may not be too late. Can we have your horses, Joel?"

"Yes, if it is possible to go where you wish. But neither man nor beast can go far in this storm. But I and they are ready to go where you can lead, Ned."

"We must get there, Joel. Unharness them from the wagon."

"I don't want to interfere with your plans, Ned, but I know of a path half-way to the mountain, and if it is in the right direction, it may be best to take the wagon."

"Right, Joel, and Nuhau here knows of a path to within a mile of Oalau's village. Can you find it in this storm?"

"I can, and I will guide you to the sacred grove of Oalau."

"You will go with us to drive, Joel?"

"Into the crater of old Mauna Loa, if you say so, Ned. But your father had better stay here with Monckton. He could do no good by going, and every pound's weight will only add to the burden of the horses."

Even Mr. Merriweather, as much as he wanted to go, could see the wisdom of this argument. Thus he allowed himself to be helped into the house. While the boys were assisting him Mr. Place covered up his horses with such coverings as he could get, and fitted a sort of hoodwink over their eyes.

"Get every rag of clothing you can of Monckton," he advised. "We shall need all the protection we can find before we have gone far through this storm, I can tell you."

Such preparations as were possible being quickly made, he mounted to the seat and picked up the reins, to head the weary horses toward the mountain and the centre of the storm. Nuhau, who was to act as guide, took a seat beside him, while Ned and Lew climbed up behind them, when they started on their memorable ride.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE RIDE THROUGH THE LAVA STORM.

IN silence, save for an occasional word of encouragement from Joel Place to his horses, the little party rode on into the very battle-ground of Mauna Loa. The outbursts of the volcano grew less frequent, and the spouting of fire and steam gradually subsided, but the black storm raged with increasing fury. They had not gone more than a mile before they came within the radius of the falling shower of stone, which whistled and struck all about them. It was well Joel had taken the precaution he had with the horses, or they would have been compelled to stop there or have pushed ahead on foot.

As it was, he had all he could do to keep them moving. So far he had driven them on at a swinging gallop, but now they moved at a slower gait. But in a short time the flying stones fell more scattering, until only an occasional missile fell. Again the animals were urged forward at a quicker step, the sounds of their hoofs and the wheels muffled by the falling matter, while they penetrated deeper and deeper into the region of black storm.

When Joel had driven as far as he knew the way, he handed the reins over to Nuhau, who took them with a firm grasp, and urged the creatures on where the path became narrower and rougher, the earth-cloud falling faster and

thicker about them, until they were completely enveloped in the black mantle. The trees were bowed beneath the lava mass, so that often the horses had to stop until Ned or Lew could jump down and clear the way. Their progress was now very slow, and growing slower all the time.

Finally they came to what the day before had been a river of considerable size, but the water of which was now absorbed by the fluffy débris. Knowing this stream flowed near to Oalau's village, Nuhau wisely followed its course instead of trying to penetrate a forest which was becoming impassable. For a quarter of a mile they ploughed their way through the black mass reaching to their bodies, and then the overworked animals stopped.

"As far as we can go," declared Nuhau.

"How much farther is it to Oalau's village?" asked Ned.

"A long walk in this storm."

"Can you find the way?"

"Nuhau willing to try."

"Then lead on. There is no danger that the horses will stray."

On foot the four pressed forward with a determination not to give up while life and strength was left them. Nuhau went in advance for awhile, but so deep was the wading that he tired of making a path, and the others took their turn. In this way half a mile was made, and they were glad to stop and rest under a tree so heavily loaded that it looked like a huge umbrella.

"Aren't we most there?" asked Ned, anxiously. They were now getting so near to the mountain that the heat was becoming intense. Human life could not withstand the oppression much closer to the volcano.

"Not have to walk much more," replied Nuhau, encour-

agingly. "See that poor steer wading through the storm. He has got lost."

The light from the crater was here bright enough to illume the stormy scene with a yellow glare that enabled them to see an object several yards away. As the young Hawaiian pointed at the moving object which had caught his attention, the others saw what looked like a huge quadruped struggling through the black snow. Lew was the first to discover the mistake, and he exclaimed:

"It is a man!"

Seeing that Lew was right, they shouted to the bewildered wanderer, but the confusing thunder of the volcano drowned their voices, so the unknown continued to struggle on in a direction taking him away from them.

"Fire your revolver," said Joel, when Lew acted upon the suggestion. The first report caused the bowed figure to assume a more erect position, and the second to put him on the right course to find them. As it was evident that he was weak from his exertions, Ned and Lew went to his assistance.

"Thank God!" said the man, in a tone too low to be heard by any but Lew, who was bending over him. "I could not have gone much farther. I have wandered in this fearful storm till I am nearly dead."

The tone of his voice had such a familiar ring to it that Lew bent still lower, and brushing the lava dust from his features he was startled to find that he was Marks.

Ned saw this, too, but he looked into Lew's face in silence. In his distress both forgot that he was an enemy, and willingly offered their assistance to him. But none of them felt like going back to the wagon with him if it could be avoided.

"We have a team just below here. Don't you think you can follow our tracks back to it? We are going farther."

"To the village of the Sacred Grove, — Oalau's home?"

"Yes."

"I was trying to find my way to the place when the storm came on, and I lost my way. Yes, after I rest a little I think I can reach your wagon. I will try; you can go on."

He did not appear to recognise them, and bidding him to be of good courage they resumed their tedious journey. Nuhau, with less at stake, was the calmest of the four weary plodders. Ned and Lew looked anxiously forward to the end. Would they find their friends alive? With dread forebodings at their hearts, they struggled manfully on.

"Are you sure you have not lost your way?" asked Ned, finally.

"Look there, if you think so!" replied Nuhau.

Ned felt like shouting his joy at the sight which suddenly dawned upon his vision, only such a course would have filled his mouth with the fine cinders. Buried under the blackened mass, so as to have nearly lost all resemblance to the place, as he had seen it, he recognised the home of Oalau. Before the door of one of the grass huts was a huge hummock, or big boulder as it looked, loaded with the ashes and cinders of the storm. It was the home of the High Priest of Pele, and thither the four wended their way. Ned brushed the deep layer of soft earth from the form, to find underneath the recumbent figure of the aged prophet.

Oalau, the strangler, the outlaw, the deluded prophet, was dead.

The sight struck a chill of dread to the hearts of the four. If this strange individual, so tenacious of life, had perished, what hope had they for their friends? Where should they

look for them? Joel suggested that they separately continue the search. In this manner every hut was overhauled, but they found no trace of the missing ones.

"It doesn't appear that Oalau's followers have been here since the outbreak," said Lew. "Perhaps they perished at the crater."

"And mother and sister with them!" exclaimed Ned.

With the heat from the volcano pouring down upon them, and the showering lava and scoria wrapping them in a black cloak, at last the four paused near the lower side of the buried village, with a feeling of hopelessness at their hearts. All their efforts had been for naught. They could do no better than to return to the living while they could do so.

"This is too much to bear!" cried Ned. "I do not care to go back to my home. Mother, mother! Grace, where are you?"

"Let me fire my revolver again," said Lew. "They may be within hearing of it."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

MARKS'S CONFESSION.

LEW'S suggestion was a happy one. Had he not acted upon it how different must have been the result! His first shot brought no reply, but at the second report a movement was witnessed in the edge of the thicket, and at the third sound two figures emerged slowly from out of the blackened shield of the forest. Covered with the storm cloak, and seen dimly through the flickering volcanic light, Ned recognised the two. Rushing forward with outstretched arms, he cried:

"Mother — Grace! found at last. Saved — saved!"

That was a scene never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it. But as happy as were the reunited ones, Joel did not allow them much time for their expressions of joy. The storm was raging with unabated fury, the night growing darker and the black snow deeper. The sooner they were on their return journey the better.

Ned was wise enough to know this, and he lost no time in assisting the others in leaving the dismal place. Mrs. Merriweather and Grace were so nearly overcome with what they had passed through that at first it seemed as if they would have to be carried to the wagon. But the knowledge that they had at last been found by friends gave them strength, and, with such assistance as the four could lend them, they reached the wagon.

The horses were standing with bowed heads in the same tracks in which they had left them. Marks had managed to reach the spot, and was lying prone under the vehicle. After lifting Mrs. Merriweather and Grace into the wagon, they helped him to climb up over the rail, when he fell on the bottom in a heap. The animals were then headed for home, and the rescuers finding such room as they could in the cart, the return journey was begun.

With their backs to the storm and their hearts lightened by the accomplishment of their object, this part of the trip was one of pleasure rather than hardship. The horses seemed to catch something of the buoyant spirits of their masters, and jogged along at a good gait whenever they could. To describe the joy of that reunion at the half-way house needs no words of a disinterested party. No expression of mind can portray it. That old building, with its desolate owner, held the happiest hearts in Hawaii that night, for it was deemed neither prudent nor possible for the visitors to return to Hilo. But with all this new-found happiness it came under the shadow of sorrow. Two at least of the little party were weighed down under a deep grief.

It proved that Captain Marks, who was recognised by all, was suffering great pain, and he himself declared that his end was near. It was no wonder, under the circumstances and their appearance, that he did not recognise those who had brought him there. While they were trying to make him as comfortable as possible, he interrupted them, exclaiming:

"I cannot — I must not stay here! I must find my boy before I die."

"You must be quiet," said Lew, who at that moment was smoothing out the blanket under his head. "Perhaps by and by you can — "

"'MOTHER! GRACE! FOUND AT LAST!'"

For the first time Marks had a fair view of Lew's face, and in a moment his manner changed. Raising his arms feebly, he put them around our hero's neck, murmuring:

"My son! you here? How glad I am! I have no more to wish for."

It was a surprised group about the couch of the speaker, and Lew's surprise was greatest of all.

"I do not wonder you do not recognise me, Lew, for I went away when you were too young to remember me. But I am your father. Your mother has told you of me; have you no kind word for me?"

If at first dazed by this acknowledgment, he quickly comprehended the situation. In a moment it was all plain to him. This man toward whom he had been drawn in a mysterious manner was his misguided father. He clasped the uplifted hand, saying, in a husky tone:

"I did not dream of this, father. You have acted like an enemy instead of a parent to me since I have come to Hawaii."

"I know it, Lew, forgive me. I will soon explain, when I hope you will not think me wholly bad. You know how I left home and all I held dear under the cloud of wrong-doing. I came here to Hawaii, and found the Merriweathers already here. But they did not know me, and I got along very well, having determined to live a different life. But I quarrelled with Merriweather, and then in a spirit of revenge I joined the royalists. Carrying my revenge still further, I sought to ruin the family. In Oalau, the Hawaiian priest, I found a willing and effectual ally. He was looking for victims to offer Pele, and I persuaded him to carry off the Merriweathers, which he did. Repenting of this at the last moment, I went to the mountain to get Oalau to undo the dark

work I had hired him to do. But I was too late. Two of the family have suffered a fearful death, and in the sight of Heaven I am their murderer!"

Here he broke down, and, burying his face in his hands, wept for some time. As soon as he found opportunity, Lew said:

"They escaped, father. How glad I am! They are here."

"Here? I must see them. Will they come to me?"

The reunited family had paid but little attention to this surprising meeting of Lew and his long-lost father, but now they quickly joined, amazed at the truth now made plain. Mr. Hiland did not sue in vain for forgiveness, and other matters were forgotten, while the little circle gathered about the humble sufferer.

"I thought, Lew, when you came, that it was to find me and to set the officers after me. That was my reason for causing you to be carried off in the way I did. The queen has had nothing to do with what any of you have suffered. She has enough to answer for without bearing the blame of my sins. Her cause is weakening, and no one knows it more than herself, which accounts for many of her foolish actions. But I have no time to speak of her mistakes. I am growing weaker. I fell and hurt myself internally. I feel that I have only a few hours left me. Do not shed a tear for me, my son, I am not worthy of it. I have thought of you many times, and I can die happy to know that you are with me. You have grown to be a manly youth, and I need not ask you to profit by my mistakes. I know you will be an honest man."

Lew found it hard to speak for the grief which he felt. Though he had been separated from his father when he was so young that he had had no memory of him, and he knew

that he had done wrong, he felt that it had not been all intentional, and felt a genuine sorrow for him.

"I am so glad that I came to Hawaii, father!"

"So am I, my son. And now I have one favour to ask. I do not wish to be taken back to Oahu, but to remain on this island until it is over with me, and then to be buried here."

It is not necessary to repeat more that was said, for there was no sleep for any of them that night. Mr. Hiland continued to sink, and even Lew was obliged to own that he did not have long to live.

Mrs. Merriweather and Grace had already told Ned and his father the story of their captivity, which can be briefly summarised. They had been carried off in very much the same manner as Mr. Merriweather, though treated respectfully all of the time, even to the hour set for their death. What they suffered can be imagined. The violence of the outbreak of the mountain frightened off Oalau's attendants, except Lau, who helped him get them to his village at the sacred grove. It proved that the aged prophet had a short and secret way of reaching the crater by an underground passage. By this path the captives were brought down from the volcano, while it seemed the mountain was being torn into pieces. Lau was so frightened that he fled from the village of the sacred grove as soon as it was reached, and it was believed that he had come directly to the half-way house. Mrs. Merriweather and Grace, with their hands bound, were left in one of the grass huts, which it will be readily understood was no protection from the storm. Through fright and overexertion Oalau was completely exhausted. Thus they sought to leave the valley, but soon became bewildered, and in despair hovered under the bowed

branches on one of the trees, until the report of Lew's revolver told them that some one was near. Trembling, lest this should prove an enemy, they left their shelter, to find themselves in the arms of those who had searched for them so far and long.

"Let us hope with Oalau has passed away the last of the idolaters," said Joel Place, a wish which was fervently seconded by all present, and which subsequent developments have proved to be the case.

Of course Ned and Lew had their story to tell, all of which is familiar to us, until the time we left them prisoners in the walled ravine. Upon sounding the rock they found that the barrier running across the defile was thin, and the rock so seamed and cracked that after a long attack upon it they succeeded in breaking a place through large enough to admit the passage of their bodies. This was but a few minutes before the storm set in, and, attracted by the light of the half-way house, they directed their footsteps in that course. It was providential that they did.

Why the captors of Mr. Merriweather should have left him to the fate that they did was never really known. Doubtless they had tired of having him in charge longer, and, not wishing to witness his death, had taken that cruel way of leaving him to a fate worse than speedy end, had their plans worked as they had intended. As they reviewed the affair from their capture to deliverance, they unanimously decided that the hand of a benign Providence had brought them safely through.

CHAPTER XXXV.

RISE OF THE FLAG OF LIBERTY.

THE following morning found Mauna Loa quiet once more, though there were evidences of its recent outbreak that would remain for many months. Our little party at the hermit's prepared to start for Hilo, it being considered best to move Mr. Hiland, who was no better, to the home of Joel Place.

He withstood the journey as well as they had expected, but the following day he passed away, surrounded by his friends. Under these conditions, and with the promise that nothing should be said against him in Oahu, he died peacefully. Now, in the light of what he said, it was found that the wrong-doing charged against him at home had been due more to weakness than any intention to do a criminal act. Freely forgiven by those whom he had wronged most, he was resigned and happy in the brief companionship of Lew and the others.

Though anxious to get back home, the Merriweathers remained until after the funeral. This was done largely on Lew's acount, for they felt for him in his bereavement. If his father had erred they did not consider him to blame. His heart thus touched and softened with grief, Lew found his new friends very dear to him.

It is doubtful if any one on the island was more surprised over the discovery of Oalau and his band of stranglers under

the shadow of Mauna Loa than the solitary missionary, when Ned described how he and Lew had found the outcast at the village of the sacred grove. Ned was after the ponies, which he found all right, and nothing he could say persuaded the lonely man to leave his home in the wilds for one among his fellow men. Looking back as he rode away, Ned saw the kind-hearted man for the last time, as he watched him pick his course down the broken path.

It was the good fortune of the party to return to Oahu on the steamer *Waimea*, and no one was more pleased at this than Captain Norton. Ned and Lew were glad to know that he had lost nothing by his assistance in their escape, save the boat. But when they offered to pay for this, he stoutly refused to take a cent.

Upon reaching Wailuku Ned found opportunity to send word to Mike O'Doyle in regard to his lost pocketbook, generously giving it to him and his good wife if he could find it. Some three months later Ned received word that the money had been found at the bottom of the pali and that Mike was happy.

Naturally, the safe return of the Merriweathers created considerable talk, but the affairs of the government had so nearly reached the inevitable crisis that other subjects soon took its place.

Lew, under the beneficial effects of the climate, found that he was gaining in health every day, and needing no urging to make Oahu his permanent home, he became greatly interested in the affairs of the day, until he and Ned were among the most anxious, if not active, promoters of the new government.

"The Kamehamehas," said Ned, "were men of considerable ability and regard for personal liberty, but unfortu-

nately each ruler was weaker than his predecessor. As long ago as 1851 Kamehameha III. realised that a native government must ultimately fail, and he sought the protection of the United States. The old Kamehamehas, as they are still reverently called by the Hawaiians, with all their mistakes, were wise enough to choose their advisers from among the ablest and most public-spirited of the American and European residents. But with Kamehameha V. the last of the direct line disappeared, when weak, unprincipled rulers succeeded, until Queen Liliuokalani ascended the tottering throne in the midst of political turmoil and social disturbances. But even under these conditions, so great was the confidence of her race in her, she might have governed in peace and been a benefactor to her people, had she been willing to lean on the arm of England. But she wouldn't do that, and calling around her unwise and unscrupulous counsellors she has gone from bad to worse, until the end of her reign is near at hand."

The truth of Ned's prediction was established on January 14, 1893, when the leaders of the oppressed people felt that to delay longer the formation of a republic was to allow all that they held dear to be swept from them. Accordingly, two days later a provisional government was organised, with Judge Sanford B. Dole at the head. The next day, amid a scene of great excitement, but without bloodshed, the new power begun its rule.

So successful and satisfactory was this management of public affairs that on July 4, 1894, the Republic of Hawaii was formally proclaimed. Long before the sun had paid his morning respects to Diamond Head on that memorable day, the streets of Honolulu were thronged with people, many of them wearing bows of red, white, and blue. Private houses

and public buildings were decorated with flags, palm branches, and garlands of flowers. Punctually at nine o'clock President Dole and his cabinet, with the commander of the government troops, General Soper, stood out on the steps of the Executive Building and addressed the thousands who had assembled to witness the scenes. Among the good things that he said was the following:

"The movement for popular government, which has to-day reached such an important stage in this country, began in 1839, when Kauikeaouli, swayed by the light of the new civilisation which was fast dawning upon his kingdom, surrendered his unlimited sovereign power, and proclaimed to every man the rights of 'life, limb, liberty, and freedom from oppression, the earnings of his hands and the productions of his mind.' The progress of this cause, from that day to this, has been irresistible. There have been times, indeed, when it seemed to slacken its pace, and even to turn back on its course, but obstacles only served to give it a chance to gather its strength for swifter advance. The Land Commissioners and the great *Mahele*, by which the lands of the kingdom were divided between the people, the chiefs, the government, and the king; the constitutions of 1853, 1864, 1887, and the proclamation of January 14, 1893, are the milestones along the way. To-day, as we pass through the gate Beautiful into a new realm full of promise, we set up another milestone greater and grander than all that stand behind us. The end is not yet."

"Isn't it grand, glorious?" asked the enthusiastic Ned of his inseparable companion Lew. "At last Hawaii is free!"

So it truly seemed, but, as President Dole had said, there was another step to take, and I cannot refrain from describ-

ing the planting of another milestone in the onward career of Hawaii. Ned and Lew were far away, fighting under the flag of the starry navy the battles of their country, winning fresh laurels, which I hope to describe some day in another volume.

At last the petition for annexation to the United States had been favourably considered at Washington, and on July 7, 1898, President McKinley signed the important document which made the Paradise of the Pacific a part of the great republic. Again a public demonstration was called for, and again on the forenoon of August 12th the streets of Honolulu thronged with its many races of people having a common interest at heart. It was an impressive scene in front of the Government Building, where were those who had come to see the flag under which they had been born pulled down and in its place a new emblem raised, and those who had come to behold the fruition of years of patient struggles and sacrifices for the welfare of the sunny isles. At half-past eleven the Hawaiian band struck up the strains of the national song, "Hawaii Ponoi," playing it for the last time as such. The moment this music ended with its melancholy interest, at precisely eight minutes to twelve o'clock noon, a bugle-tap sounded as the signal for the Hawaiian flag to be pulled down from the flagstaffs on the Government Building. No sooner was this accomplished than a bugle-call for the raising of "Old Glory" rang out, the *Philadelphia* band played the "Star Spangled Banner," and amid the strains of that beautiful song the stars and stripes were unfurled to the tropical breeze from every official flagstaff. Cheering followed, and eyes that were dim before found a brighter light in the newly announced power.

Out from the multitude of excited and enthusiastic specta-

tors came an aged, white-headed Hawaiian, who had been born under Kamehameha I., and who had lived under all the different forms of government. Mounting the stone steps with a new-found strength, he waved his hand over his head, while he cried to the listening crowd:

"Long may this starry banner wave over Hawaii as the Land of the Free. Aloha!"

THE END.